He is Omniscient
A Course on the Knowledge and Science of Islam
– 2 –

Knowing the Imams

Volume 4

The Virtues of Ali, the Master of the Faithful

Allamah Sayyid Muhammad
Husayni Tihrani

Translated by
Rasul Dawlati and Sayyed Bossier

Editor
Sayyed Khalil Toussi

Series Editor
Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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Note: While it is common in Persian or Arabic to place blessings on the Prophet or the Imams (you may find an "as," "s," or "pbh" or something similar after the names of the Imams), it is not common practice in an English text. Readers should just say the phrase of blessings in their heart when they see reference to the Prophet or Imams.

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Knowing the Imams
Volume 4

Exegetical, philosophical, traditionist, historical, and sociological discussions on Guardianship in general, and, the Imamate and Guardianship of Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib and the infallible Imams in particular

Discursive and scientific lessons taken from the Noble Qurʾan and Sunni and Shiʿa hadiths; discussions on Guardianship, providing solutions and critique

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ʿAllāmah Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusayni Ṭihrānī

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Commentary on the Verse

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا...

...and that which We have revealed to you from the Book is the Truth confirming what preceded it; surely with respect to His servants God is Aware, Seeing.

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission; and that is the same great divine favour. (35:31–32)

LESSONS FORTY-SIX TO FIFTY-ONE

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

Blessing upon Muhammad and his infallible Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ
ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

...and that which We have revealed to you from the Book is the Truth confirming what preceded it; surely with respect to His servants God is Aware, Seeing.

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission; and that is the same great divine favour. (35:31–32)

Commentary on Verses 35:31–32

The first verse is what God said to the Holy Prophet about the truthfulness of the Book revealed to him—the Book called the Glorious Qur'an, the confirmer of all the divine Books revealed to the previous Prophets.

The second verse is about the inheritance of the same Glorious Qur'an from the Prophet by servants chosen by God.

Some exegetes are uncertain of the meaning of the "Book" and say: "Perhaps it is one of the other divine Books such as the Torah or the Gospels." However, their uncertainty is totally unfounded, because the definite article in

الْكِتَابِ

does not mean the genus, and there is no previous mention of the Torah or the Gospels in previous verses such that it should refer back to one of them. However, the word

الْكِتَابِ

in the first verse definitely refers to the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet, and the very next verse refers to the inheritance of the Book by His chosen servants. Accordingly the definite article

ال

in

الْكِتَابِ

has to refer back to the Glorious Qur'an, meaning: "We will give the same Qur'an as the inheritance to Our chosen servants."

The reason why the statement is in the past tense—"We *gave* as the inheritance"—is that the Divine Judgment has already been passed, and it is binding. It is like someone who says after leaving property or books to his son in his will, confirming and signing it: "O my son, I have made my will and have left you such and such."

Grammarians say that anything that is sure to happen in the future is expressed in the perfect tense. Inheritance of the Qur'an means the Qur'an, in all respects, passes to the heir because the literal meaning of "inheritance" is for all authority to pass to the heir—to be responsible for using it according to the testator's testamentary instructions. For example, if a person inherits something from the deceased, it means the heir has full authority but is also responsible for protecting and using it in accordance with the testator's wishes. However, he is the owner as the testator was before him.

Hereditary monarchy or government is the same; they say: "so-and-so inherited the crown from his father," or "a sultan has given the sultanate to his son," or "someone became the heir to his father's knowledge," or "one of several children inherited his father's arts and knowledge"—that is, he learned all his father's arts and knowledge and succeeded him with them.

The Meaning of Inheriting the Qur'an

Inheriting the glorious Qur'an, in this verse, means the same as God's entrusting the Qur'anic truths, *which He had revealed to His Prophet*, to the Inheritors of it—the obvious truths such as the general and specific commandments, vague and clear, absolute and qualified, abrogating and abrogated, stories of the messengers and previous nations, morality and religious knowledge, monotheism on all its levels, warnings, promises and threats, benefits and detriments, and levels of the soul and its appearance in other worlds.

The Qur'an's hidden truths are its interpretation and its applicability and relevance to later events, and there are truths hidden in its verses, such as those concerning the essence of the natural world; the inter-world; the pre-existential imaginal realm; the world of the intellect; the angels; the spirits and their statuses; the levels of those rewarded and those punished; the reality and perception of pure monotheism; how the Divine Names and Attributes encompass all realms and combine in the Essence; how there is manifestation in all worlds, and divine signs on the horizons and in souls and much more; and that God has entrusted to the Inheritors of the Qur'an that they become God's Messenger's successors, taking his place in every sense. They are a natural extension of the Noblest Messenger, performing, preserving, and doing what is best for the nation in accordance with the meanings of the Qur'an.

Therefore, the Inheritor of the Qur'an is a genuine copy of God's Messenger. The Qur'an will be made manifest in the presence of the heirs, one after the other, as the decisive and plain Qur'an was made manifest, as is written:

كتب احكمت ءايته ثم فصلت من لدن حكيم خبير.

...a Book whose verses are made decisive, then made plain, from the Wise, All-Aware. (11:1)

It has been revealed with glory to the heirs, one after another, because there must be a real relationship between the testator and the heir—everyone cannot inherit everything. The crown cannot be bequeathed to the son, minister, or solicitor as an inheritance; the experience of a physician cannot be bequeathed to a dustman's son; and the knowledge of a scholar cannot be bequeathed to an ignorant person.

Similarly, it is clear that the Inheritors of the Glorious Qur'an resemble God's Messenger more closely than anyone else does, above all in attributes, inward purity, proficiency in receiving the facts, and feeling the spirit of the Qur'an, and are broad-shouldered and strong-hearted like the Generous Messenger of God.

Accordingly God states:

ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا.

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants whom We had chosen (iṣṭafayna) (35:32) because

اصطفاء

means choosing something pure and faultless. The phrase

مِن عِبادِنا

is obviously explanatory because the annexation in

عِبادِنا

is honorific. He means "Those chosen and the Inheritors of the Qur'an are the servants who want to show servitude to Us." As God, the Honorable and Exalted, says:

وَسَلٰمٌ عَلٰى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفٰى

...and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen. (27:59).

Three Categories

However,

فمنهم ظالم لنفسه ومنهم مقتصد ومنهم سابق بالخيرت بإذن الله

...yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are the foremost in good deeds with God's permission (35:32) may mean that God's servants can be divided into three categories. In that case, this sentence explains the first one; that is, We gave the Qur'an to those of Our servants whom We have chosen. That is because Our servants are not all of the same rank and level but are instead divided into three categories. Obviously the Qur'an is inherited by the best ones—the foremost in good deeds. The heavens promised in the three subsequent verses will be their lot:

جَنّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزَنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ

...Gardens of Eden they will enter, where they will wear gold and pearl bracelets and their raiment will be silk. Then they will say, "Praise belongs to God Who has taken our sadness away from us! Surely our Lord is Oft-forgiving [and] Appreciative, the One Who has settled us in the everlasting Abode by His bounty. Wherein no weariness will touch us nor fatigue affect us. (35:33)

This may be a categorization of

الذين اصطفينا

that is: We gave the Qur'an as an inheritance to Our chosen ones, and they are divided into three groups: the first are those who wrong themselves, the second are those who follow a middle course, and the

third are those who are the foremost in good deeds—with God's permission.

According to the Qur'an all three inherit because in spite of their differences, they are all chosen. However, the true inheritors and custodians of the Qur'an are the foremost in good deeds.

This kind of usage and style is common in ordinary conversation: when something belongs to a particular person, it can still be attributed to that person's group. It is like saying: "In a particular match, team X won the race," even though only one member of the team actually won, or saying: "The Qur'an was revealed to the Meccans, and then the Medinans," even though it was obviously revealed to God's Messenger alone.

There are a great many such usages in the Qur'an; Sūrat al-Mu'minūn (The Believers) says:

ولقد ءاتينا موسى الهدى وأورثنا بنى اسرءيل الكتب هدى وذكرى لأولى الالبب

...We also gave Moses the Guidance and let the Israelites inherit the Book, Guidance and a Reminder for people of reason. (40:53–54).

However, it is obvious that the Torah was not inherited by all the Israelites, but rather just by some of them, after Moses's death. Alternatively, "Book" does not mean the Torah itself, but rather the heavenly Book revealed to Moses as the Torah, but not revealed to all the Israelites.

In any event, when considering hadiths narrated by both Shi'a and Sunnis, it is clear that this second possible explanation is more likely. In this verse, God divides His servants into three groups, and in spite of their differences, some of them even wronging themselves, they are distinct from others by virtue of being chosen. All three groups deserve to inherit the Qur'an even though the true heirs are the third group, who are foremost in good deeds. Proof of that is that the Gardens of Eden are promised to all three—those who wrong themselves, those who follow a middle course, and the foremost in good deeds, because of God's forgiveness, and as a reward for their good deeds respectively.

This is because in those verses, they praise God for His forgiveness and gratefulness, and these attributes are linked to sins, forgiveness, good deeds, and reward, so they are linked to both the first and second groups. They praise God Who has taken away their sorrows and sadness and installed them in the abode of eternity and garden of perpetuity where they will remain in comfort. This kind of praise issues from the first two groups, but not the third, who enter Heaven without reckoning and dwell in the Peaceful Quarters of God

في مقعد صدق عند مليك مقتدر

Firmly established in the favour of a Mighty King (54:55) and to whom is said:

يأيتها النفس المطمئنة ارجعي الى ربك راضية مرضية

O soul that art at rest, return to your Lord contented [and] pleasing, and enter among My servants and enter My garden. (89:27–30)

The Inheritors of the Book Are All Children of Fāṭimah

Narrations say that all three groups are children of Fāṭimah. They will all enter Heaven: however, the first group will enter after difficult reckoning because of having wronged themselves. The second group enter after easy reckoning, and the third, the true Inheritors of the Qur'an, will enter Paradise without any reckoning. There is a hadith in *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* by Muhammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī, who says via a chain of transmission on the authority of Aḥmad Ibn Omar:

قال: سألت ابا الحسن الرضا عليه السلام عن قول الله عزوجل: ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا الآية، فقال: ولد فاطمة عليها السلام، والسابق بالخيرات الامام، والمقتصد العارف بالامام، والظالم لنفسه الذى لا يعرف الامام.[1]

I asked Abū al-Hasan al-Riḍā about God's words, Mighty and Sublime is He: *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen...* He replied: "Fāṭimah's children. The foremost in good deeds is the Imam, he who follows a middle course is he who knows the Imam, and he who wrongs himself is he who does not know the Imam."[2]

Kulaynī narrates the same hadith, word for word, excluding only the words "Fāṭimah's children," on the authority of Sālim on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir.

Ibn Bābawayh also narrates it via his chain of transmission, on the authority of Jābir Ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fi on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir without mentioning "Fāṭimah's children," but adding at the end:

جنّت عدن يدخلونها يعنى المقتصد والسابق.[3]

"...Gardens of Eden that they [i.e. those who follow a middle course and the foremost] will enter."

Out of these three groups the people who will enter the Gardens of Eden are the second and third groups, that is, those who know the Imam and the Imam himself.

Ṭabarsī narrates from ʿAbd al-Azīz, on the authority of Imam Ṣādiq:

الظالم من لا يعرف حق الامام، والمقتصد منا العارف بحق الامام، والسابق بالخيرات الامام، وهؤلاء كلهم مغفور له.[4]

Imam Ṣādiq interprets the verse in the same way as does Imam Bāqir but adds at the end: "And the former [two] will be forgiven." Ibn Bābawayh narrates via his chain of transmission regarding Imam Ṣādiq:

انه سئل عن قول الله عزوجل: ثم اورثنا الكتاب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا فمنهم ظالم لنفسه ومنهم مقتصد ومنهم سابق بالخيرات باذن الله. قال: الظالم يحوم حوم نفسه، والمقتصد يحوم حوم قلبه، والسابق يحوم حوم ربه عزوجل.[5]

He was asked about *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission.* He replied:

> He who wrongs himself circles himself; he who follows a middle course circles his heart, i.e. watches his heart, so no sin issues from it and no act of obedience is missed by it, so that it is not contaminated. He thus keeps his heart pure with the light of obedience. The foremost in good deeds "circles" his Lord, Mighty and Sublime is He, so he finds no existence or heart within himself to cleanse or purify, instead perpetually looking at the beauty and manifestations of the Real, fascinated by the radiance of His Attributes and Names and annihilated in His Holy Essence.

However, ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī relates from *Maʿānī al-Akhbār* by Ṣadūq, quoting Imam Ṣādiq:

الظالم يحوم حوم نفسه، والمقتصد يحوم حوم قلبه، والسابق بالخيرات يحوم حوم ربه.[6]

"He who wrongs himself circles his own desires; he who follows a middle course circles his heart; however, the foremost in good deeds 'circles' his Lord." They both mean the same.

Imam Bāqir's Commentary on *Then We Left This Book as an Inheritance*

Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbbās Ibn Māhyār, a reliable [non-Twelver] narrator, narrates from Abū Isḥāq al-Subayʿī:

خرجت حاجا فلقيت محمد بن علي عليهما السلام فسألته عن هذه الآية "ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا"

فقال: ما يقول فيها قومك يا ابا اسحاق - يعني اهل الكوفة - ؟ قال: قلت: يقولون انها لهم، قال: فما يخوفهم اذا كانوا من اهل الجنة؟ قلت: فما تقول انت جعلت فداك؟ قال: هي لنا خاصة يا ابا اسحاق اما السابقون بالخيرات فعلي والحسن والحسين عليهم السلام والامام منا، والمقتصد فصائم بالنهار وقائم بالليل، والظالم لنفسه فيه ما في الناس وهو مغفور له يا ابا اسحاق بنا يفك الله رقابكم وبحل رباق الذل من اعناقكم وبنا يغفر الله ذنوبكم، وبنا يفتح وبنا يختم، ونحن كهفكم ككهف اصحاب الكهف، ونحن سفينتكم كسفينة نوح، ونحن باب حطتكم كباب حطة بني اسرائيل.[7]

Abū Isḥāq Subayʿī says:

> I set off on *Ḥajj* and met Imam Muhammad Bāqir, so I asked him about this verse:
>
> ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا
>
> *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen* (35:32), so he replied: "What do your people [i.e. the Kūfans] say, Abū Isḥāq?"
>
> I replied: "They say [the verse] is about them." He asked: "So what is frightening them if they are of the people of Heaven?"
>
> I asked: "Then what do you say, may I be made your sacrifice?"
>
> He replied:
>
> > [This Verse] is about us exclusively, Abū Isḥāq. The foremost in good deeds are Ali, Hasan, Husayn, and the Imam from among us. He who follows a middle course is he who fasts by day and prays by night. The situation of whoever wrongs himself is like that of other people—though he will be forgiven.
> >
> > O Abū Isḥāq, through us, God releases your napes and undoes the nooses of humiliation from your necks. Through us, He will

forgive your sins. He commences and terminates through us. We are your cave like the cave of the Occupants of the Cave, we are your Ark like Noah's Ark. We are your gate of remission like the Israelites' Gate of Remission.

Ibn Bābawayh Shaykh Ṣadūq narrates via his chain of transmission from Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī:

قال: كنت جالسا في المسجد الحرام مع ابي جعفر عليه السلام اذ اتاه رجلان من اهل البصرة فقالا له: يابن رسول الله انا نريد ان نسألك عن مسألة؟ فقال لهما: سلا عما شئتما. قالا: اخبرنا عن قول الله عز وجل: ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا فمنهم ظالم لنفسه ومنهم مقتصد ومنهم سابق بالخيرت باذن الله ذلك هو الفضل الكبير- الى آخر الآيتين- قال: نزلت فينا اهل البيت. قال ابو حمزة الثمالي: فقلت: بأبي انت وأمي فمن الظالم لنفسه منكم؟ قال: من استوت حسناته وسيئاته من اهل البيت فهو الظالم لنفسه. فقلت: من المقتصد منكم؟ قال: العابد لله في الحالين حتى يأتيه اليقين. قلت: فمن السابق بالخيرت؟ قال: من دعا والله الى سبيل ربه وأمر بالمعروف ونهى عن المنكر ولم يكن للمضلين عضدا ولا للخائنين خصيما، ولم يرض بحكم الفاسقين الا من خاف على نفسه ودينه ولم يجد أعوانا.[8]

Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī says:

I was sitting in the Holy Mosque with Imam Muhammad Bāqir when two Basrans came to us and said: "God's Messenger's son, we want to ask you a question."

[The Imam] said: "Ask whatever you want."

They said: "Tell us about God's words: *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission; and that is the same great Divine favour...*" (35:32–33)

He replied: "They were revealed about us, the Household."

Abū Ḥamzah says:

I then asked: "May my father and mother be made your sacrifice, who among you wrongs himself?"

He replied: "Whoever in the Household has as many good deeds as bad deeds has wronged himself."

I asked: "Which of you follows a middle course?"

He replied: "Whoever serves God in both situations: until death (*al-yaqīn*) comes to him." I asked: "Who is the foremost in good deeds?" He replied: "By God, whoever invites the people to God, enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong, does not support those who lead astray, is not content with the rule of the sinful apart from whoever fears for himself and his religion and has no helpers."

The author of *Thāqib al-Manāqib* narrates from Abū Hāshim al-Jaʿfarī:

I was sitting with Abū Muhammad Imam Hasan ʿAskarī and I asked him about:

ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا فمنهم ظالم لنفسه ومنهم مقتصد ومنهم سابق بالخيرت بإذن الله قال عليه السلام: كلهم من آل محمد، الظالم لنفسه الذى لا يقر بالامام، والمقتصد العارف بالامام، والسابق بالخيرت بإذن الله الامام. قال: فدمعت عيناى وجعلت افكر فى نفسى ما اعطى الله آل محمد، فنظر الى وقال: الامر اعظم مما حدثتك به نفسك من عظم شان آل محمد فاحمد الله قد جعلك مستمسكا بحبلهم تدعى يوم القيامة لهم اذا دعى كل اناس بامامهم، فابشر يا ابا هاشم وانك على خير.[9]

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission (35:32). He replied: "They are all Muhammad's family; those who wrong themselves are whoever does not acknowledge the Imam; those who follow a middle course are whoever knows the Imam. The foremost in good deeds with God's permission is the Imam."

My eyes teared up and I started thinking to myself how much God had given Muhammad's family. He looked at me and said: "The matter is greater than your soul has told you of the greatness of Muhammad's family's affairs. Now praise God. He made you cling to their rope. You will be called to them on the Day of Resurrection when everyone is called by their Imam. Rejoice, Abū Hāshim, for you have a good future!"

The Imam Is the Heir to All the Knowledge of the Qur'an

Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī narrates via his chain of transmission on the authority of Ahmad Ibn Ḥammād on the authority of his father regarding Abū al-Hasan (Mūsā Ibn Jaʿfar):

> I asked, "May I be made your sacrifice. Tell me about the Prophet. Did he inherit from all the prophets?" [The Imam] replied: "Yes, he inherited from Adam, all the way down to himself. God has not sent any prophet than whom Muhammad was not more learned." I said: "But Jesus, son of Mary, resurrected the dead with God's permission!"
>
> He replied:
>
> > You speak the truth, and Solomon, son of David, knew the language of the birds. However, God's Messenger is capable of all these levels.
> >
> > When Solomon son of David could not see the hoopoe, and suspicion fell on it, he said:
> >
> > مَالِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ
> >
> > *...How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or is it among the absent?* (27:20)
> >
> > It was because the hoopoe showed Solomon the water on the surface of the land, and because of the sharpness of its eyes, it saw the patches of water on the land and guided Solomon to that position.
> >
> > He became angry over its absence and said:
> >
> > لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَاذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ
> >
> > *...I shall punish it severely, or I will slaughter it, unless it brings me a convincing excuse.* (27:21)
> >
> > In any event, Solomon was angry, because whenever he needed water, the hoopoe would direct him to it, but now, he was short of water.
> >
> > Solomon, who had the wind, ants, humans, *jinn* and devils, and evil beings at his service, did not know water under the air, but the hoopoe did.
>
> والله تعالى يقول: "وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْءَانًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَى
>
> The Exalted God says in His Book: *And if there were a Qur'an by which the mountains were moved, or by which the earth were travelled, or with which the dead were made to speak...* (13:31)

We have inherited this Qur'an by which the mountains were moved and the earth was split into pieces, and with which the dead were raised. We know water under the air [and do not need a hoopoe or its knowledge]. There are verses in God's Book that do not mean anything without God's permission, along with what God permits, from what the people of the past have written. God has put it in the Mother of the Book for us.

God says:

وما من غائبة في السماء والارض الا في كتب مبين.

And there is nothing hidden in heavens or on earth which is not in a Clear Book. (27:75)

Then He states:

ثم اورثنا الكتب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا.

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. (35:32)

We are those whom God has chosen, and to whom this, in which there is explanation of everything, has been left as an inheritance.[10]

The Imam Has All the Prophets' Knowledge

Uṣūl al-Kāfi says via its chain of transmission on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir:

يمصون الثماد ويدعون النهر العظيم. قيل: وما النهر العظيم؟ قال: رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم والعلم الذي اعطاه الله. ان الله عزوجل جمع لمحمد سنن النبيين من آدم وهلم جرا الى محمد. قيل له: وما تلك السنن؟ قال: علم النبيين باسره، وان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم صير ذلك كله عند امير المؤمنين [11]

[Imam Bāqir said:] "They suck from the scarce dregs and leave the great river!"

[He] was asked: "What is the great river?"

He replied: "God's Messenger and the knowledge that God has granted him. God, the Honorable and Exalted, has gathered for Muhammad all the customs of all the Prophets—from Adam to Muhammad."

He was asked: "What are those customs?"

He replied: "The knowledge of all the prophets in its entirety. God's Messenger passed it all on to the Master of the Faithful."

In *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, the same hadith is related from Ali Ibn Nu'mān. *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, via its chain of transmission, quotes Imam Muhammad Bāqir as saying:

كان جميع الانبياء مائة الف نبي وعشرين الف نبي، منهم خمسة أولو العزم: نوح وابراهيم وموسى وعيسى ومحمد صلى الله عليه وعليهم، وان علي بن أبي طالب كان هبة الله لمحمد وورث علم الاوصياء وعلم من كان قبله اما ان محمدا ورث علم من كان قبله من الانبياء والمرسلين.

There were 120,000 prophets in total of whom there were archprophets (*ūlu al-'azm*): Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib was a gift from God to Muhammad. He inherited the knowledge of the executors and the knowledge of his predecessor. Muhammad inherited the knowledge of his predecessor prophets and envoys.

It is narrated via their chains of transmission in *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* and *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* that Ḍurays al-Kinānī said:

I was in the presence of Imam Ṣādiq, and Abū Baṣīr was also there, sitting with him. The Imam said: "The prophet David inherited the knowledge of all the prophets prior to him, and his son, Solomon, inherited all the knowledge of his father, David; we the Imams, from the Household, inherited all Muhammad's knowledge. Abraham's scrolls and Moses' tablets are with us."

Abū Baṣīr said: "This truly is knowledge!"

[The Imam] replied: "O Abū Baṣīr, this is not knowledge. Knowledge is what renews night by night, day by day, and hour by hour. However, those scrolls and tablets are another essence that has settled in our existence in a general way and cannot renew or change—now, this daily knowledge flows from that source."

A similar hadith is related in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* from Ayyūb Ibn Nūḥ and Muhammad Ibn 'Īsā from Ṣafwān[12] and in *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* from Ibn Muskān from Abū Baṣīr quoting Imam Ṣādiq as having said:

يا ابا محمد ان الله عز وجل لم يعط الانبياء شيئا الا وقد اعطاه محمدا جميع ما اعطى الانبياء، وعندنا الصحف التي قال الله عز وجل صحف ابرهيم وموسى

قلت: جعلت فداك هي الالواح؟ قال: نعم.[13]

O Abū Muhammad, God, the Honorable and Exalted, did not give anything to the prophets without giving everything that He had given to those prophets to Muhammad. We have the scrolls about which God said: *Abraham's and Moses' Scrolls* (87:19)." I asked: "May I be made your sacrifice, are they the tablets?" He replied, "Yes."

It is related from Hārūn Ibn Jahm in *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*:

I heard one of Imam Ṣādiq's companions quote him as having said:

ان عيسى ابن مريم اعطى حرفين كان يعمل بهما، واعطى موسى اربعة احرف، واعطى ابراهيم ثمانية احرف، واعطى نوح خمسة عشر حرفا، واعطى آدم خمسة وعشرين حرفا، وان الله تبارك وتعالى جمع ذلك كله لمحمد صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم. وان اسم الله الاعظم ثلاثة وسبعون حرفا اعطى محمدا اثنين وسبعين حرفا وحجب عنه حرف واحد.[14]

Jesus, son of Mary, was given two letters with which he worked. Moses was given four letters, Abraham was given eight letters, Noah was given 15 letters, and Adam was given 25 letters. Surely God, Blessed and Exalted is He, gathered all that together for Muhammad. Surely God's Greatest Name has 73 letters. He gave Muhammad 72 letters and hid one letter from him.

Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt says that Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī said about Imam Sajjād Ali Ibn al-Husayn:

قال: قلت له: الائمة يحيون الموتى ويبرؤن الاكمه والأبرص ويمشون على الماء؟ قال: ما اعطى الله نبيا شيئا قط الا وقد اعطاه محمدا صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم، واعطاه ما لم يكن عندهم الخبر.

"I asked him: 'Can the Imams raise the dead, heal the blind and lepers, and walk on water?' He replied: 'God has never given any prophet anything without giving it to Muhammad, but He has [also] given him what they did not have...'"

Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt also says via its chain of transmission, on the authority of Jābir on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir:

قال: اعطى الله محمدا صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم مثل ما اعطى آدم فمن دونه من الاوصياء كلهم، يا جابر هل تعرفون (يعرفون ـ خ ل) ذلك؟[15]

"God gave Muhammad the like of what he gave Adam and all the other executors. Jābir, do you know [do they know] that?"

Al-Ikhtiṣāṣ by Shaykh Mufīd says on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Bukayr al-Hijrī on the authority of Imam Bāqir:

Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib is God's gift to Muhammad:

ورث علم الاوصياء وعلم ماكان قبله، اما ان محمدا ورث علم من كان قبله من الانبياء والمرسلين.[16]

He has inherited the knowledge of the executors and the knowledge of what preceded it; it was because Muhammad inherited the knowledge of the Prophets and envoys preceding him.

The Prophets' and Imams' Miracles Come After They Have Perfected Themselves; The Imam Inherits All the Prophets' Perfection and Merits

In any case, what can be inferred from all these hadiths is that all the spiritual and knowledge-based perfection of the previous prophets was passed on to Muhammad and from him to Ali, and was inherited by the Imams of the Household.

It was not only their revelation and divine knowledge of divine laws that the Holy Prophet inherited, but also all their qualities and spiritual attributes, and the circumstances of their connection to the Exalted Origin through names exclusive to them. The Prophet even has all their miracles and greatness, by God's leave. It is because the miracles of the prophets are due to their pure, powerful, and faithful hearts that are illuminated by God's commands, and then, when the right time approaches, they are performed by their pure souls but with God's permission. However, as their souls are different, these manifestations are also different, and every prophet produces a particular type of miracle.

Nor is their divine knowledge of the same level or of the same kind. All of them had the honor of entering the divine precinct—as regards perception of the status and greatness of God's Oneness—but in a particular respect and with a particular attribute.

The titles and names such as *the Spirit of God, Spoken to by God, the Friend of God, God's Confidant,* and *God's Chosen One* are not honorific or ceremonial titles. Rather, they denote the particular proficiencies each one possessed. God's gifts to them were not all the same. Rather, each one, in his own way, had a divine attribute. The essence of that attribute was manifested in him. It was by the means of these attributes that the prophets performed their miracles, and by receiving any of those names. Divine knowledge would come into their hearts through the window of that attribute via trustworthy Gabriel.

However, the Seal of the Prophets and Envoys, who manifested all the Divine Names and attributes, has a pure, accommodating soul and the purest heart; he has [God's] Greatest Names, and is annihilated in the Name of Monotheism and the Holy Divine Essence.

The title "Seal of the Prophets" is not honorific or ceremonial, but is rather due to the greatness of his soul and his ability to soar high to the Names and attributes and the manifestation of [God's] Greatest Names, and receive the highest degree of monotheism. Then his annihilation in the Essence of Unity, all worlds, all knowledge, and all the gifts of all the previous prophets are blended into his soul, making him "the Seal of the Prophets." All previous messengers were his vanguard. Each of them found a particular way to God and had a particular merit. However, the great soul of the Prophet of Islam has reached the Source of all being through numerous routes, and all the Divine Names and attributes are manifest in him. Therefore, the Holy Prophet is the heir to all the prophets, so they are all subordinate to him and honored to support him.

"Whatever good they have, you have many times better."

Imam Ali Has All the Perfection of the Prophets

Thus, the Master of all Beings has the knowledge of all the prophets and executors, has all their miracles and more. The Banner of Praise will be given to him on the Day of Resurrection because he is the imam of those who praise God as He should be praised.

All these ranks, virtues, levels, privileges, knowledge, Divine Names, and Greatest Names [of God] passed from the Holy Prophet to his caliph and successor, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, so he is the mirror image of the Prophet. On the Day of Judgment, the Prophet will pass the Banner of Praise to Ali.

This great status of heir is both a creationary and legislative decree; that is, knowledge of whatever was, is, and will be right up until the Day of Resurrection is presential knowledge in his mind. God's power and the greatness of the Divine Names are manifest in the executor's pure soul and bright mind:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا.

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. (35:32)

It is on this basis that the prayer-duel verse (Āyat al-Mubāhalah) refers to Ali as the Prophet's self:

فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ

...then say, "Come, let us call our children and your children, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves; then let us pray earnestly... (3:61)

Many Shi'a and Sunni hadiths agree that the imam is as the Prophet's own self—they are united in souls, virtue, and knowledge.

Apart from these hadiths, many Shi'a and Sunnis narrate that God's Messenger compared Ali to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, John, and Joseph. Obviously the comparison is not correct unless the person being compared shares attributes with the other to whom he is compared—many prophetic sayings not only compare him but rather put him on the same level.

Here, we are going to cite some Sunni hadiths.

Muhammad Ibn Ṭalḥah al-Shāfiʿī[17] narrates via his chain of transmission on the authority of Bayhaqī, and Ibn Ṣabbāgh al-Mālikī[18] narrates in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, that God's Messenger said:

مَنْ اَرَادَ اَنْ يَنْظُرَ اِلَى آدَمَ فِى عِلْمِهِ، وَاِلَى نُوحٍ فِى تَقْوَاهُ، وَاِلَى اِبْرَاهِيمَ فِى حِلْمِهِ، وَاِلَى مُوسَى فِى بَطْشِهِ، وَاِلَى عِيسَى فِى زُهْدِهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ اِلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ اَبِى طَالِبٍ

"Whoever wants to look at Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his piety, Abraham in his clemency, Moses in his strength, and Jesus in his asceticism, should look at Ali."[19]

By way of exegesis of the prayer-duel verse (Āyat al-Mubāhalah), Fakhr Rāzī says:

> It is quite clear that Ali's self is Muhammad's self. Because the consensus is that Muhammad is better than all the other prophets, it must follow that Ali is better than all the prophets except God's Messenger; evidence in support of this is the hadith narrated by both friends and foes:
>
> مَنْ اَرَادَ اَنْ يَرَى آدَمَ فِى عِلْمِهِ، وَنُوحًا فِى طَاعَتِهِ، وَاِبْرَاهِيمَ فِى خُلَّتِهِ، وَمُوسَى فِى هَيْبَتِهِ، وَاِلَى عِيسَى فِى صَفْوَتِهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ اِلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ اَبِى طَالِبٍ
>
> "Whoever wants to look at Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his obedience, Abraham in his being [God's] Friend, Moses in his awesomeness, and Jesus in his choiceness, should look at Ali."

He then says: "He has everything that was divided up among them, and this proves that Ali is superior to all the prophets."

Traditionally and recently, the Shi'a have relied on this verse as evidence that Ali is superior to all [the Prophet's] companions because of what it means, that Ali's self is like Muhammad's self—except

where there is evidence to the contrary. Muhammad himself is superior to all the companions, so it necessarily follows that Ali is superior to all the companions.

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates from Abū al-Ḥamrā' quoting God's Messenger:

مَنْ أرادَ أن يَنظُرَ إلى ابراهيمَ في حِلمِهِ، وَإلى نوحٍ في حُكمِهِ، وإلى يُوسف في جَمالِهِ فليَنظُر إلى عليِّ بن أبي طالب

"Whoever wants to look at Abraham in his clemency, Noah in his judgment, and Joseph in his handsomeness should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Ibn ʿAbbās narrates that God's Messenger said:

مَنْ أرادَ أن يَنظُرَ إلى آدَمَ في عِلمِهِ، وَإلى نُوحٍ في حُكمِهِ، وإلى ابراهيمَ في حِلمِهِ، وإلى موسى في هَيبَتِهِ، وإلى عِيسى في زُهدِهِ فَلْيَنظُر إلى عليِّ بنِ أبي طالبٍ.[20]

"Whoever wants to look at Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his judgment, Abraham in his clemency, Moses in his awesomeness, and Jesus in his asceticism, should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Mullā Ali Muttaqī cites this hadith in *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*.[21] Muḥibb al-Dīn quotes Abū al-Ḥamrā' as saying:

قالَ رسولُ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: مَن اَرادَ أن يَنظُرَ إلى آدَمَ في عِلمِهِ، وإلى نُوحٍ في فَهمِهِ، وَإلى ابراهيمَ في حِلمِهِ، وَإلى يَحيَى بن زَكريّا في زُهدِهِ، وَإلى موسى في بَطشِهِ، فَلْيَنظُر إلى عليِّ بن أبي طالبٍ.[22]

"God's Messenger said: 'Whoever wants to look at Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his understanding, John, son of Zachariah in his asceticism, and Moses in his strength should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"

At the bottom of page 212 of *al-Manāqib*, he quotes Ibn Maghāzilī as saying: "This hadith is cited by Khārazmī in *al-Manāqib* (p. 49, p. 245), Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* (vol. 2, p. 217), Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (vol. 2, p, 229), Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal in his *Musnad*, and Bayhaqī in his *Ṣaḥiḥ*.

Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī also quotes Ibn ʿAbbās as saying:

قال: قالَ رَسُولُ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: مَنْ أرادَ أن يَنظُرَ إلى ابراهيمَ في حِلمِهِ، وَإلى نوحٍ في حُكمِهِ، وإلى يُوسف في جَمالِهِ فليَنظُر إلى عليِّ بن أبي طالب

He said: "God's Messenger said: 'Whoever wants to look at Abraham in his clemency, Noah in his judgment, and Joseph in his handsomeness should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."[23]

Mullā Ali Muttaqī cites this hadith in *al-Sīrah*.

Moreover, via his chain of transmission, Ibn al-Maghāzilī quotes Anas Ibn Mālik as saying that God's Messenger said:

مَن أرادَ أن يَنظُرَ إلى عِلمِ آدَمَ، وَفَهمِ نُوحٍ فَلْيَنظُر إلى عَلِيِّ بنِ أبي طالِبٍ

"Whoever wants to look at Adam's knowledge and Noah's understanding should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Via his chain of transmission, Ganjī Shāfiʿī quotes Ibn ʿAbbās as saying:

قال: بَينَما رَسُولُ اللهِ صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم جالِسٌ في جَماعَةٍ مِن أصحابِهِ أقبَلَ عَلَى فَلَمّا بَصُرَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم قال: مَن أرادَ مِنكُم أن يَنظُرَ إلى آدَمَ في عِلمِهِ، وإلى نُوحٍ في حِكمَتِهِ، وَإلى إبراهيمَ في حِلمِهِ فلينظُر إلى عَلِيِّ بنِ أبي طالِبٍ

"While God's Messenger was sitting among a group of his companions, Ali approached. Then, when God's Messenger caught sight of him, he said: 'Whoever of you wants to look at Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his judgment, and Abraham in his clemency should look at Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"

He then says: "The reason that God's Messenger compared Ali's knowledge to Adam's was that God taught Adam the nature of everything:

كما قالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ الأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا

...and He taught Adam the names—all of them. (2:31)

So, there is no thing, incident, or battle the knowledge of which and understanding in deducing the meaning of which Ali does not have.

The reason his wisdom—or his judgment, according to another hadith that may be more correct—is compared to Noah's, is that Ali was strict with the unbelievers and kind to the believers, as described by God, the Exalted, in the Qur'an:

وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

...and those who are with him are strict with the unbelievers, but merciful among themselves. (48:29)

In the Qur'an, God speaks of Noah's strictness, as in:

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا

O my Lord, do not leave any dwellers from among the unbelievers on the earth. (71:26)

He compared his clemency to that of Abraham, the Merciful's Friend. As God describes [the latter] in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ إِبْرٰهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيبٌ

Lo! Abraham was mild, imploring, penitent. (11:75)

Therefore, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib had the prophets' morals and the executors' attributes.[24]

Qundūzī Ḥanafī says:

> There is a hadith from Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq Ibn Muhammad al-Bāqir quoting his forefathers on the authority of the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib :

قَالَ: إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم نَظَرَ إِلَيَّ وَأَنَا مُقْبِلٌ وَأَصْحَابُهُ حَوْلَهُ وَقَالَ لِي: اما انَّ فِيكَ شِبْهاً مِن عيسَى بنِ مَرْيَمَ، وَلَوْلا مَخافَة ان يَقُولَ فيكَ طَوائِفُ مِن امَّتِي ما قالَتِ النَّصارى فى عيسَى بنِ مَرْيَمَ لَقُلْتُ فيكَ مَقالاً لا تَمُرُّ بِمَلإٍ مِنَ النّاسِ إلّا أَخَذُوا التُّرابَ مِن تَحْتِ قَدَمَيكَ يَبْتَغُونَ فيهِ البَرَكَةَ وَيَسْتَشْفُونَ بِهِ. فَقالَ المُنافِقُونَ: لَمْ يَرْضَ مُحَمَّدٌ الّا ان يَجْعَلَ ابنَ عَمِّهِ مَثَلاً لِعيسَى بنِ مَرْيَمَ، فَأَنزَلَ اللهُ تَعالَى: «وَلَمّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلاً إِذا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ وَقالُوا ءَالِهَتُنا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلّا جَدَلاً بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ إِنْ هُوَ (أى عَلِيٌّ) إِلّا عَبْدٌ انعَمْنا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنهُ مَثَلاً لِبَنِي إِسرائيل.[25]

Ali said:

> God's Messenger saw me when I was approaching and his companions were around him. He said to me:
>
> > O Ali! Lo! There is a resemblance to Jesus, the son of Mary, about you. If I were not worried what some of my people would say about you, as they did about Jesus, the son of Mary, I would say something about you [such that] you would not pass by any crowd of people without their taking the dust from under your feet, seeking blessing in it, and seeking to heal themselves with it.
>
> The hypocrites said: "Muhammad was not satisfied until he had likened his cousin to Jesus, son of Mary." Thereafter, God revealed: *When the son of Mary is quoted as an example, behold! Your folk raise a clamour thereat and say: "Are our gods better or is he?" They raise not the objection save for argument. Nay! But they are a contentious people. He* [i.e. Ali] *is nothing but a servant on whom We have bestowed favour, and We have made him an example for the Israelites.* (43:57–59)

Then Qundūzī Ḥanafī says:

Salmān also narrates a hadith similar to this. Abū Baṣīr narrates a prayer from Imam Ṣādiq that matches this wording:

اللّٰهُمَّ قَدْ أَجَبْنَا دَاعِيَكَ الْمُنْذِرَ النَّذِيرَ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّيْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَبْدَكَ وَرَسُولَكَ الَّذِي دَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَى وِلَايَةِ عَلِيٍّ يَوْمَ الْغَدِيرِ الَّذِي انْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْتَهُ مَثَلاً لِبَنِي اسْرَائِيل.[26]

"Oh God, we answered your caller, the exhorter, the warner, Muhammad whom You have blessed, Your servant and Messenger, who invited the people to accept the Guardianship of Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib on the Day of Ghadīr, whom You favored and made an example for the Israelites."

He also says:

Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, al-Bazzār, Abū Yaʿlā, and Ḥākim all quote Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib as saying:

قَالَ: دَعَانِي رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: إِنَّ فِيكَ مَثَلاً مِنْ عِيسَى. أَبْغَضَتْهُ الْيَهُودُ حَتَّى بَهَتُوا أُمَّهُ، وَأَحَبَّتْهُ النَّصَارَى حَتَّى نَزَّلُوهُ بِالْمَنْزِلَةِ الَّتِي لَيْسَ فِيهَا. ثُمَّ قَالَ عَلِيٌّ: وَإِنَّهُ يَهْلِكُ فِيَّ اثْنَانِ: مُحِبٌّ مُفْرِطٌ يُقَرِّظُنِي بِمَا لَيْسَ فِيَّ، وَمُبْغِضٌ يَحْمِلُهُ شَنَآنِي عَلَى أَنْ يَبْهَتَنِي.[27]

"The Prophet called me and said: 'O Ali, there a likeness to Jesus about you. The Jews hated him to the point that they slandered his mother but the Christians loved him to the point that they elevated him to a status that is not his.'"

Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib then said: "Two [groups] are doomed over me: those who love me excessively, versifying me with what I don't have, and those who hate me, their loathing of me causing them to slander me."

And there are a great many narrations that say that Ali entered God's sanctuary, and his soul was crushed into the Divine Lights and he was annihilated into God's Essence. Obviously the manifestations of the Essence are manifest in the existence of whoever has such a characteristic, and he becomes:

يد الله وقدرة الله وعين الله وسمع الله

"God's hand, God's power, God's eye, and God's hearing," miracles issuing from him. The more he is "crushed into" the Holy Essence, the more God's attributes, which are concomitant with His Self, shine in the mirror of his being.

Ali Has Seven Attributes That No One Else Has

Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī, via his chain of transmission, narrates from Yaḥyā Ibn Saʿīd al-Anṣārī, quoting Saʿīd Ibn Musayyib, who quotes Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī as saying:

قالَ: قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلّى الله عليه و آلِهِ وَسلّمَ لِعَلِيٍّ ـ وَضَرَبَ بَيْنَ كَتِفَيهِ ـ يا عَلِيُّ لَكَ سَبْعُ خِصالٍ لا يُحاجُّكَ فِيهِنَّ أَحَدٌ يَوْمَ القِيامَةِ: أَنتَ أَوَّلُ المُؤمِنِينَ بِاللهِ إيماناً، وَأَوفاهُم بِعَهْدِ اللهِ، وَأَقوَمُهُم بِأَمرِ اللهِ، وَأَرأَفُهُم بِالرَّعِيَّةِ وَأَقسَمُهُم بِالسَّوِيَّةِ، وَأَعلَمُهُم بِالقَضِيَّةِ، وَأَعظَمُهُم مَزِيَّةً يَوْمَ القِيامَةِ.[28]

God's Messenger said, patting Ali on the back:

> O Ali, you have seven attributes that no one can dispute with you on the Day of Resurrection: You are the first believer in God, most faithful to God's covenant, most upright in God's command, kindest to the flock, fairest at sharing among them, most knowledgeable of them in passing judgment, and most distinguished of them on the Day of Resurrection.

It is obvious that the Prophet said categorically to Ali, "These attributes you have are unequalled by anyone else on the Day of Resurrection. None of the prophets or envoys equal you in them. The level you have reached with these seven attributes is unreached by anyone else."

Abū Nuʿaym quotes Anas Ibn Mālik as saying:

بَعَثَنِي النَّبِيُّ صلّى الله عليه و آله وسلّم إلى أبي بَرْزَةَ الأسْلَمِيِّ فَقالَ لَهُ ـ وَأنا أسْمَعُ ـ: يا أبا بَرْزَةَ إنَّ رَبَّ العالَمِينَ عَهِدَ إلَيَّ عَهْداً في عَلِيِّ بْنِ أبي طالِبٍ فَقالَ: إنَّهُ رايَةُ الهُدى، وَمَنارُ الإيمانِ، وَإمامُ أوليائي، وَنُورُ جَمِيعِ مَن أطاعَنِي. يا أبا بَرْزَةَ عَلِيُّ بنُ أبي طالِبٍ أمِينِي غَداً في القِيامَةِ وَصاحِبُ رايَتِي في القِيامَةِ عَلى مَفاتِيحِ خَزائِنِ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي.[29]

The Prophet sent me for Abū Barzah al-Aslamī. He then told him:

> O Abū Barzah, my God has made a covenant with me concerning Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, saying that he is the banner of guidance, the lighthouse of belief, the leader of those who love me, and the light for everyone who obeys me. O Abū Barzah, tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib will be my trustee, my standard-bearer with regard to custody of the keys to the treasure-troves of my Lord's mercy.

Obviously because the Prophet is the best of all the messengers, and no one but his trustee Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib is the custodian to the keys of God's mercy, the exclusivity of this status proves that he holds a special position not held by any of the prophets.

Ḥamwīnī, in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, and Abū Nu'aym, via his chain of transmission, relate a hadith from Isḥāq Ibn Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah quoting his father as saying:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم: لا تَسُبُّوا عَلِيًّا فَإِنَّهُ مَمْسُوسٌ فِي ذاتِ اللهِ تعالَى.[30]

"God's Messenger said: 'Do not vilify Ali, because he is possessed by the Transcendent God's Essence!'"

Also via his chain, Abū Nu'aym narrates from Sulaymān Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah from his paternal aunt Zaynab bint Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah, who was the wife of Abū Ḥammū'ī Khudrī, from Abū Sa'īd Khudrī:

قَالَ: شَكَى النَّاسُ عَلِيًّا، فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم خَطِيبًا فَقَالَ: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَا تَشْكُوا عَلِيًّا فَوَ اللهِ إِنَّهُ لَأَخْشَنُ فِي ذاتِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.[31]

"The people complained about Ali, so God's Messenger stood up, delivering a sermon, saying: 'O people! Do not complain about Ali. By God, he is stern for God's sake, Mighty and Sublime is He!'"

Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates a similar hadith from the Prophet, and says: "Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal cites this hadith."

It is also related by Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah that the Prophet said:

إِنَّ عَلِيًّا لَمَخْشُونٌ فِي ذاتِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

"Indeed Ali is stern for God's sake, Mighty and Sublime is He."

He then says that Abū Omar cites this hadith.[32]

It was on this basis that the prophets' and messengers' miracles were performed by Ali.

In his commentary on this noble verse:

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا؟

...do you think that the Companions in the Cave and al-Raqīm, were unique among Our signs? (18:9), Rāzī says:

وَلِهَذَا قَالَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ كَرَّمَ اللهُ وَجْهَهُ وَاللهِ مَا قَلَعْتُ بَابَ خَيْبَرَ بِقُوَّةٍ جَسَدَانِيَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ بِقُوَّةٍ رَبَّانِيَّةٍ وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّ عَلِيًّا كَرَّمَ اللهُ وَجْهَهُ فِي ذَلِكَ الْوَقْتِ انْقَطَعَ نَظَرُهُ عَنْ عَالَمِ الْأَجْسَادِ وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

بِأَنْوارِ عالَمِ الكِبْرِياء فَتَقَوى رُوحُهُ وَتَشَبَّهَ بِجَواهِرِ الأَرواحِ المَلَكِيَّةِ وَتَلَأْلَأَتْ فِيهِ اضواءُ عالَمِ القُدوسِ وَالعَظَمَةِ فَلا جَرَمَ حَصَلَ لَهُ مِنَ القُدرَةِ مَا قَدَرَ بِها عَلَى مَا لَمْ يَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهِ غَيْرُهُ.[33]

This is why Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib said: "By God, it was not with bodily strength that I ripped away the Gate of Khaybar, but rather the Lord's Power!"

That is because at that moment, his attention was cut off from the world of things, the angels shone with the lights of grandeur, and his soul was strengthened, and resembled the essences of the angelic spirits and the lights of the world of holiness. Greatness shone in it, so inevitably he had the strength to do what no one else could. Forty-four strong men could not lift [the Gate of Khaybar] off the ground. Ali ripped it away with a single blow and threw it down, and it became a bridge for the soldiers to cross into the Citadel of Khaybar.

The Imam Journeys Miraculously to Ctesiphon When Salmān Dies

Ibn Shahr Āshūb quotes Ḥabīb Ibn Hasan ᶜAtkī as saying that Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh al-Anṣārī said: "Imam Ali performed the dawn prayer with us in Medina, and then, he turned to us saying: 'O people! May God reward you greatly for your bereavement over your brother, Salmān!'"

[The people] then spoke about that. Thereafter, he put on God's Messenger's turban and robe, picked up his staff and sword, mounted al-ᶜAḍbā' [the camel he had inherited from God's Messenger] and said to his companion, Qanbar: "Count to ten."

He says: "I did so, and lo and behold we were at Salmān's door in Ctesiphon."

Zādhān says:

> When death approached Salmān, I asked him: "Who is going to [ritually] bathe you?" He answered: "The same man who ritually bathed God's Messenger." I said: "But you are in Ctesiphon and he is in Medina!" He replied: "Zādhān, if you shroud my jaw you will hear the knock."

Zādhān says:

> When I shrouded his jaw I heard the knock. I reached the door and behold I saw Ali.
>
> The Holiness asked: "O Zādhān, has the [pious servant] Abū ᶜAbdillāh Salmān passed away?"

I replied: "Yes, my Master." Then, [the Imam] entered the room and lifted the cloak off [Salmān's] face; thereupon Salmān smiled at the Master of the Faithful.

He said to him: "Greetings, Abū ʿAbdillāh! When you meet God's Messenger, tell him what his people have done to his brother!" He then started preparing him [for burial]. Then, when he performed the funeral prayer over him, we heard Ali say, "God is too Great [to describe]," loudly. I saw two men with him. He then said: "One of them is Jaʿfar, my brother, and other is the Khiḍr. There are 70 rows of angels with each of them and there are 1000 angels in each row!

(He placed Salmān in his grave, poured soil on top of him, and then returned to Medina before dawn broke).

And concerning this, Abū al-Faḍl says:

سَمِعْتَ مِنِّي يَسِراً فِي عَجَائِبِهِ وَكُلُّ أَمرِ عَلِيٍّ لَمْ يَزَلْ عَجَباً.

From me, you heard, but so little, of [Ali's] wonders
For always all Ali's affairs are wonders.

أَدَرَيْتَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ سَارَ الوَصِيُّ إِلَى أَرْضِ المَدَائِنِ لَمَّا أَنْ لَهَا طُلِبَا

Did you know the executor traveled to the land of Ctesiphon in a single night when he headed towards it

فَلَحَدَ الطُّهْرَ سَلْماناً وَعَادَ إِلَى عِرَاصِ[34] يَثْرِبَ وَالإِصْبَاحُ مَا قَرُبَا

Then buried pure Salmān and returned
To the courtyards of Yathrib, before dawn approached

كَآصِفَ قَبْلَ رَدِّ الطَّرْفِ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِعَرْشِ بِلْقِيسَ وَافَى يَخْرُقُ الحُجُبَا

Like Āṣif, before the twinkling of an eye, from Sheba,
Brought Bilqīs' throne to Solomon, breaking the clouds

فِي آصِفٍ لَمْ تَقُلْ مَا أَنْتَ بَالِي أَبِي حَيْدَرٍ غَالِ أَوْ رِدُ الكَذِبَا؟

You do not say, "Do you...?" about ʿĀṣif but I'm exaggerating a lie about Ḥaydar

إِنْ كَانَ أَحْمَدُ المُرْسَلِينَ فَذَا خَيْرُ الوَصِيِّينَ أَوْ كُلُّ الحَدِيثِ هَبَا

If he was the most laudable (*aḥmad*) of the envoys, then this is the best of the executors. Otherwise all hadith is nonsense!

وَقُلْتَ مَا قُلْتَ مِنْ قَوْلِ الغُلَاةِ فَمَا ذَنْبُ الغُلَاةِ إِذَا قَالُوا الَّذِي وَجَبَا.[35]

You say what you say about what extremists say, but what fault is it of the extremists when they say what is necessary?

Some of the Imam's Miracles; Even Animals Obey the Imam

Ibn Wahbān and Fattāk quote a number of people as saying: "We were walking with the Master of the Faithful when we reached a vast reed-bed and suddenly saw among the reeds a lion lying down, its cubs behind it."

Juwayrah Ibn Musahhar says:

So I turned my mount to go back, but the Imam asked: "Where to? Advance, Juwayrah. It is just God's dog." He then recited the Transcendent God's words:

وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ.

There is no creature that crawls, the forelock of which He is not in control of, for surely my Lord is on a Straight Path. (11:60)

Lo and behold, it had approached him, wagging its tail and saying:

السلامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ يَا ابْنَ عَمِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ.

"Peace, God's mercy and blessing be upon you, Master of the Faithful, God's Messenger's cousin!"

The Imam replied: "And peace be upon you, Abū Ḥārith. What is your praise?" He answered: "Glory be to God Who clothed me with awesomeness and cast fear of me into His servants' hearts."

Imam Bāqir said:

Ali said to Juwayrah Ibn Musahhar, who resolved to leave: "Either it will turn his attention to you on the way..." He asked: "Then, what recourse is there?" The Holiness stated: "Pass the greeting on to it and tell it that I have granted you safe passage from it."

Then, while Juwayrah was proceeding, the lion approached him, so Juwayrah told it: "Abū Ḥārith, Ali passes his greetings to you and has granted me safe passage from you."

[Juwayrah] says:

[The lion] then turned round and roared five times.

When he returned, he told Ali. He said, counting up to five on his fingers: "*F-aqra'* [1], *waṣī* [2], Muhammad [3], *minnī* [4], *al-salām* [5]!" ("Pass on my greetings to Muhmmad's executor!")[36]

ᶜAmr Ibn Ḥamzah al-ᶜAlawī says in *Faḍā'il al-Kūfah*:

Once, Ali was in the prayer niche in Kūfa Mosque when a man before him stood up to refresh his ablution. Suddenly, a viper caught him on his way [ready] to gobble him up. The man then fled before it towards Ali. Thereafter Ali got up and stood at the entrance to the hole where the viper was. He took his sword and planted it in the entrance to the hole. He said to the sword: "If you are a miracle like Moses's staff, get rid of the viper."

In just a moment the viper went away to his left. He then lifted his head up, [looked] at the Bedouin man, and asked: "Did you think I was the fourth of four when you stood before me?" He replied: "It's true." He then slapped himself on the head and submitted.[37]

ᶜAmmār Ibn Yāsir and Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Anṣārī both said independently:

I was with the Master of the Faithful in the desert and saw that he had turned off the road. I followed him and saw him look up at the sky and say: "Well done, bird, when you chirped and freed yourself from the trap by His grace!"

I asked: "My Master, where is the bird?" He replied: "In the air. Do you want to see it, and hear what it says?"

I replied: "Yes, my Master."

He then looked up at the sky and prayed quietly, and all of a sudden the bird came down to the ground resting on Ali's hand. The Imam stroked its back and said: "Speak with God's permission. I am Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib." God then made the bird speak in clear Arabic, and it said:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

"Peace, God's mercy and blessing be upon you, Master of the Faithful!" [The Imam] returned its greeting and asked it: "Where do you get your food and water in this dry wilderness with no vegetation or water?" It replied: "My Master, when I become hungry I remember your Guardianship, People of the Household, satisfying my hunger. When I am thirsty I disassociate myself from your enemies, quenching my thirst."

[The Imam] stated: "Bless you, bless you!" Then, the bird flew away, like the Exalted's words:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ.[38]

O people, we have been taught the language of the birds. (27:16)

In *Muʿjizāt al-Nubuwwah* (*Miracles of Prophecy*), Muhammad Ibn Wahbān Azdī Dīblī relates, concerning Ali:

> A flock of geese flew over Ali's head, honking and cackling. Ali then told his companions: "They greeted me and you." The hypocrites then winked at each other, so Imam Ali said: "Qanbar! Shout at the top of your voice: 'Geese! Answer Ali, the brother of the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds.'"
>
> Qanbar shouted that, and suddenly the birds started flapping over Ali's head.
>
> He then said: "Tell them to land." When Qanbar told them, I saw that the geese had touched the ground with their breasts in the courtyard of the mosque on one piece of land. Ali began speaking to them in a language unknown to us. They were stretching their necks out towards him and honking. He then said to them: "Speak with the permission of God, the Strong, the Mighty." At that very moment, all of them spoke in clear and fluent Arabic:
>
> السلامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَخَلِيفَةَ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
>
> "Peace be upon you, Master of the Faithful, and the Caliph of the Lord of the worlds!
>
> And this is like what the Exalted said about David:
>
> يَا جِبَالُ أَوِّبِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ وَأَلَنَّا لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ.[39]
>
> *"...O mountains and birds, echo his psalms of praise!" We also made iron pliant for him.* (34:10)

ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ says on the authority of Ali Ibn Ḥātim Qazwīnī, via his chain of transmission, from Aʿmash, quoting Ibrāhīm Ibn Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib as saying:

> One day, Ali set off, stood over the Euphrates, and said: "*Hannash*!" Thereupon the eel (a kind of water creature that the Arabs call *ḥankalīs* or water snakes) lifted its head out [of the water]. He asked it: "Who are you?" It replied: "I am of the nation of the Israelites. Your Guardianship was presented to me but I did not accept it, so I was turned into an eel!"

The Sun Is Sent Back on Several Occasions for Ali

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "Ibn Mardawayh in *al-Manāqib*, Abū Isḥāq Thaʿlabī in his exegesis, Abū ʿAbdillāh Ibn Mundah in *al-Maʿrifah*,

Abū ᶜAbdillāh Naṭanzi in *al-Khaṣāᵓiṣ*, al-Khaṭīb in *al-Arbaᶜīn*, and Abū Ahmad Jurjānī in *Tārīkh Jurjān* all cite Ali's turning back the sun.

Abū Bakr Warrāq wrote a book on the chains of transmission of the hadith about the sun being turned back; Abū ᶜAbdillāh has written a book on the possibility of the sun's being turned back. Abū al-Qāsim refutes objections to the authenticity of the sun's having being turned back and the sun's spiting those who showed open hostility [to the Prophet's Household]. Abū al-Hasan Ibn Shādhān wrote a book explaining the sun's being turned back by the Master of the Faithful. Abū Bakr Shīrāzī cites [the hadith] fully in his book via a chain of transmission on the authority of Shuᶜbah on the authority of Qatādah, on the authority of Hasan Baṣrī quoting Umm Hānī and adds:

As a follow-up to this hadith, Hasan Baṣrī says:

God, the Exalted, revealed two verses on the matter. The first is:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا.

And He it is Who made the night and day follow each other for whoever wants to remember or wants to be grateful. (25:62)

That is, they are alternatives for anyone who wants to fulfil his individual duty, or has gone to bed without fulfilling his duties—or he has in his mind to praise and give thanks to his Creator.

The second verse is:

يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ.

...He rolls night onto day, and rolls day onto night. (39:5)

He then adds that the sun was sent back several times for the Master of the Faithful. Once was when Salmān related the event, and the rest were the following: at the Battle of Bisāṭ, at the Battle of Khandaq, at the Battle of Ḥunayn, at the Battle of Khaybar, at the Battle of Circassium, at the Battle of Burāthā, at the Battle of Ghāḍiriyyah, at the Battle of Nahrawān, at the Battle of the Pledge of Riḍwān, at the Battle of Ṣiffīn, and in Najaf, Banī Māzir, and al-ᶜAqīq Valley, and after Uḥud.

Kulaynī narrates that when he was in Faḍīkh Mosque in Medina, the sun was sent back for him.

However, the majority say it happened twice: once during God's Messenger's lifetime at Kirāʿ al-Ghamīm, and then at Babel, after the Prophet's death.

The incident that occurred during the Prophet's lifetime is the same one narrated by Umm Salmān and Asmāʾ bint ʿUmays, Jābir Ibn ʿAbdillāh Anṣārī, Abū Dharr Ghifārī, Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Saʿīd Khudrī, Abū Hurayrah, and Imam Ṣādiq: God's Messenger performed his prayer at Kirāʿ al-Ghamīm, but as soon as he had finished praying, revelation came to him. At that moment, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib went to him and saw the revelation come down, and so he sat and held the Prophet in his arms and pressed him to his own body. The revelation continued until the sun had set. The revelation stopped, and the Prophet asked Ali: "Have you performed your prayer?" Ali answered, "No," and proceeded to explain the incident to God's Messenger. The Prophet then said: "Let us pray to God to bring the sun back for you." Ali prayed according to the Prophet's instruction and all of a sudden the shining sun came back.

A hadith narrated by Abū Jaʿfar Ṭaḥāwī says:

> God's Messenger implored: "O my Creator! Ali has been busy with obedience to You and obedience to Your Prophet, so please bring the sun back for him." The sun then came back, miraculously. Ali stood up and said his prayer; after he finished his prayer, the sun set and the stars appeared.

Abū Bakr Mahrawayh's hadith says: "It is narrated that Asmāʾ said: 'By God, when the sun was going to set, a sound like the sawing of wood could be heard.'"

Abū Bakr Mahrawayh says: "This event took place in unvegetated land (*ḍahyāʾ*) at the Battle of Khaybar.[40] Another hadith says that the Imam performed his prayer signaling [the motions]. Then, when the sun came back, he repeated it with God's Messenger's permission."

Poetry about the Sun's Being Sent Back for Ali

Ṣāḥib Ibn ʿAbbād says about the incident:

لا تُقبَلُ التَّوبَةُ مِن تائِبٍ إلا بِحُبِّ ابنِ أبي طالِبِ

> Not a sinner's repentance is accepted,
> Without love for the son of Abī Ṭālib.

أخي رَسُولِ اللهِ بَلْ صِهْرُهُ وَالصِّهْرُ لَا يُعْدَلُ بِالصَّاحِبِ

God's Messenger's brother and indeed his son-in-law is he,
And a son-in-law is unequalled by any companion.

يَا قَوْمِ مَنْ مِثْلُ عَلِيٍّ وَقَدْ رُدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ غَائِبِ[41]

People! Who is equal to Ali
The sun coming back for him after setting?!

Ḥimyarī says:

فَلَمَّا قَضَى وَحْيُ النَّبِيِّ دَعَالَهُ وَلَمْ يَكُ صَلَّى الْعَصْرَ وَالشَّمْسُ تَنْزِعُ
فَرُدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْسُ بَعْدَ غُرُوبِهَا فَصَارَ لَهَا فِي أَوَّلِ اللَّيْلِ مَطْلَعُ[42]

When revelation to the Prophet ended, he prayed for him, not having prayed in the late afternoon and the sun having set,
So the sun came back for him, becoming [sun]rise at the beginning of the night!

The second time was after the Prophet's death. Juwayrah Ibn Musahhar, Abū Rāfiʿ, and Husayn Ibn Ali relate that when Ali crossed the Euphrates in Babel, he prayed the late afternoon prayer on his own with a group who were with him.

Then, the people did not finish crossing the river before sunset, so they missed the late afternoon prayer.

They told [him] about it, so he asked the Exalted God to bring the sun back for him, and He did so.

It was on the horizon. Then, when the people uttered the final greeting, it set. It was heard making a loud noise. It frightened the people, so they said repeatedly, "There is no god but God," "Praise be to God," and, "God is too great [to describe]."

Masjid Radd al-Shams (the mosque where the sun was brought back) is well-known in Babel.

It is narrated by Ibn ʿAbbās via numerous chains of transmission that the sun has only ever been brought back for Solomon, David's executor, Joshua son of Nūn, Moses's executor, and Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, Muhammad's executor, God's blessings on all of them.[43]

Sayyid Ḥimyarī says:

رُدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْسُ لَمَّا فَاتَهُ وَقْتُ الصلاة وَقَدْ دَنَتْ لِلْمَغْرِبِ
حَتَّى تَجَلَّجَ نُورُهَا فِي أُفْقِهَا لِلْعَصْرِ ثُمَّ هَوَتْ هُوِيَّ الْكَوْكَبِ
وَعَلَيْهِ قَدْ رُدَّتْ بِبَابِلَ مَرَّةً اخرى وَمَا رُدَّتْ لِخَلْقٍ مُغْرِبِ
إِلَّا لِيُوشَعَ أَوَّلَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَلِرَدِّهَا تَأْوِيلُ أَمْرٍ مُعْجِبِ.[44]

The sun was brought back for him when he had missed prayer time and the sun was close to setting, until its light on the horizon shone for afternoon prayer. Then it fell like a star.

It was brought back for him again in Babel

It has not come back for any other plain speaker except Joshua Ibn Nūn, the first before him, and there is an amazing explanation for its being brought back.

Ḥimyarī also says:

عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ رُدَّتِ الشَّمْسُ مَرَّةً بِطَيْبَةَ يَوْمَ الْوَحْيِ بَعْدَ مُغَيَّبِ
وَرُدَّتْ لَهُ اخرى بِبَابِلَ بَعْدَ مَا أَفَتْ وَتَدَلَّتْ عَيْنًا لِلْغُرُوبِ.[45]

The sun was brought back for Ali after setting once in Tībah [Medina] on the day of the revelation

And was brought back for him again in Babel, after disappearing and suspending itself from setting.

Ibn Ḥammād says:

وَرُدَّتْ لَكَ الشَّمْسُ فِي بَابِلَ فَسَامَيْتَ يُوشَعَ لَمَّا سَمَى وَيَعْقُوبُ مَا كَانَ أَسْبَاطُهُ كَجَلَيْكَ سِبْطَيْ نَبِيِّ الْهُدَى.[46]

"And the sun was brought back for you in Babel, so you surpass Joshua in his excellence; and Jacob's tribes were never like your sons, the Prophet of guidance's grandsons."

Ibn Ḥammād says:

قَرَنَ الإِلَهُ وَلَاءَهُ بِوِلَايَتِهِ لَمَّا تَزَكَّى وَهُوَ حَانِ بَرَكَّعَ
سَمَّاهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ نَفْسَ مُحَمَّدٍ يَوْمَ الْمَبَاهِلِ وَذَاكَ مَا لَا يُدْفَعُ
فَالشَّمْسُ قَدْ رُدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ بِخَيْبَرٍ وَقَدِ ابْتَدَتْ زُهْرُ الْكَوَاكِبِ تَطْلُعُ

وَبِبَابِلَ رُدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ وَاللهِ خَيْراً مِنْ عَلِيٍّ يُوشَعُ.[47]

God linked his Guardianship to His Own Guardianship when he gave charity while bowing.
The Lord of the Throne called him Muhammad's self on the day of the prayer duel; that is indisputable.
Then the sun was brought back for him at Khaybar, the light of the stars having already appeared.
It was brought back for him in Babel and by God, Joshua was not better than Ali.

ᶜAwnī says:

وَلَا تَنْسَ يَوْمَ الشَّمْسِ إِذْ رَجَعَتْ لَهُ بِمُنْتَشَرٍ وَارَى مِنَ النُّورِ مُمْتَعِ
فَذَلِكَ بِالضَّهْيَا وَقَدْ رَجَعَتْ لَهُ بِبَابِلَ أَيْضاً رَجْعَةُ الْمُتَطَوِّعِ.[48]

And do not forget the day when the sun came back for him, providing a vast spread of light.
That was in the wilderness, and it also came back for him in Babel—it returned obedient.

Surūjī says:

وَالشَّمْسُ لَمْ تَعْدِلْ يَوْمَ بَابِلَ وَلَا تَعَدَّتْ أَمْرَهُ حِينَ أَمَرْ
جَاءَتْ صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ وَالْحَرْبُ عَلَى سَاقٍ فَأَوْمَى نَحْوَهَا رَدَّ النَّظَرْ
فَلَمْ تَزَلْ وَاقِفَةً حَتَّى قَضَى صَلَاتَهُ ثُمَّ هَوَتْ نَحْوَ الْمَقَرْ.

And on that Day in Babylon, the sun did not deviate or disobey his order when he gave [it].
Afternoon prayer [time] came, in the thick of battle, so he cast a glance at it
And it remained motionless until Ali had finished praying, then fell to the resting place.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

Ibn Shīrawayh Daylamī, ᶜAbdūs Hamadānī, and Khaṭīb Khārazmī tell me from their books, and my grandfather, al-Kiyā Shahr Āshūb, and Mu-

hammad Fattāl have licensed me to narrate from the books of our co-religionists, such as Ibn Qawlawayh, Kashshī, ᶜAbdakī from Salmān, Abū Dharr, Ibn ᶜAbbās, and Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib:

> When, along with the Prophet of God, we conquered Mecca and reached Hawāzin, the Prophet said: "O Ali, stand up and see how dear you are to God. Speak to the sun when it rises." Ali then stood up and spoke [to the sun while it was rising]:
>
> السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا العبد الدائب فی طاعة الله ربه
>
> "Peace be upon you, servant perseverant in obedience to God his Lord."
>
> The sun replied to him by saying:
>
> وعَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ يا أخا رَسُولِ الله وَوَصِيَّهُ وَحُجَّةَ اللهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ
>
> "And peace be upon you, brother and executor of God's Messenger, and God's Proof for His creatures."
>
> Ali then threw himself to the ground, prostrate, out of gratitude to God (and weeping). God's Messenger started lifting Ali up and wiping his face. He said: "Stand up, my beloved, for you have made the people of Heaven cry with your crying; God has boasted about you to the bearers of His Throne."
>
> Then, he said:
>
> الحَمْدُ لِلّهِ الَّذي فَضَّلَنی عَلی سائِرِ الانبياء وَأَيَّدَنِي بِوَصِيَّةِ سَيِّدِ الاوصِياءِ. ثُمَّ قَرَأَ: وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالاَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ.[49]
>
> "Praise be to God Who made me superior to all the other Prophets and helped me with the executorship of the Master of all the Executors." He then recited: *...and whoever is in the heavens and on earth submits to Him willingly or unwillingly; and to Him they shall be returned.* (3:83)

ᶜAwnī says:

إماءی كَلِيمُ الشَّمْسِ راجَعَ نُورَها فَهَلْ بِكَلِيمِ الشَّمْسِ فِي القَوْمِ مِنْ مِثْلِ.[50]

"My Imam is he to whom the sun speaks, who brings back its light; and is there among the nation anyone like him to whom the sun speaks?"

Ibn Ḥammād says:

وَرَجَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ حِينَ تَكَلَّمْتَ وَأَبْدَتْ مِن أَسماءِ الإمامِ حامَها.[51]

"The sun returned when you spoke, and it showed the beauty of the Imam's names."

Ibn Hānī al-Maghribī says:

وَالشَّمْسُ حاسِرَةُ القِناعِ وَوُدُّها لَوْ تَستَطيعُ الارضَ والتَّقبيلا
وعَلى أميرِ المؤمنينَ غَمامَةٌ تَنْأَت تُظَلِّلُ تاجَهُ تَظليلا
وَمُديرُها مِن حيثُ شاءَ وَطالَما زاحَت تَحُثُّ ظِلالَهُ جِبريلا.[52]

The sun appeared unveiled
Wishing to kiss the earth,
Above Ali hung a cloud
Casting shade on his crown.
Steering it wherever he wanted;
Whenever it went away, Gabriel would shade him.

In *al-Amālī*, Shaykh Ṭūsī narrates from Abū Muhammad Faḥḥām via the chain of transmission from Abū Maryam, who quotes Salmān as saying:

We were sitting with the Prophet when Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib approached.

The Prophet of God gave a pebble to Ali, and when the pebble came to rest in his hand, it said:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ، رَضِيتُ بِاللهِ رَبًّا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيًّا وَبِعَلِيٍّ وَلِيًّا.

"There is no deity except God. Muhammad is God's Messenger. I am content with God as Lord, Muhammad as Prophet, and Ali as Guardian."

The Prophet said:

مَنْ أَصبَحَ مِنكُم راضِيًا بِوِلايَةِ عَلِيٍّ فَقَدْ أَمِنَ خَوْفَ اللهِ وَعِقابَهُ

"Whoever among you wakes up in the morning content with the Guardianship of Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, then surely he is safe from fear of God and punishment by Him."[53]

ʿAwnī says:

مَن صاحِبُ المِندیلِ وَالسَّطلِ وَمَن فی کَفِّهِ سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ الحَصی؟

"Who is the owner of the towel and pail and in whose hand do pebbles glorify God?"

Ibn Ḥammād says:

مَن سَبَّحَت فی کَفِّهِ بیضُ الحَصی لِیَکونَ ذاکَ لِفَضلِهِ تِبیانا.[54]

"He, in whose hand white pebbles glorify God to be a sign of virtue."

The Imam Heals the Blind and Reattaches Severed Digits

ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Ibn Zayd says:

I was circumambulating [the Kaʿbah] when I heard a young girl say to her sister:

لا وَحَقِّ المُنتَجَبِ بِالوَصِیَّةِ الحاکِمِ بِالسَّویَّةِ العادِلِ فی القَضِیَّةِ العالِمِ البَیِّنَةِ زَوجِ فاطِمَةَ المَرضِیَّةِ ما کانَ کذا.

"No, by the right of him chosen as Guardian, the fair ruler, the just arbiter, the sublimely proven, husband of Fāṭimah, the pleasing, it was not so..."

I asked that girl: "Do you know Ali?"

She answered:

How can I not know him before whom my father was killed at the Battle of Ṣiffīn? One day, Ali came to visit my mother and said to her: "How are you, mother of children who have lost their father?"

My mother answered: "Well." She then brought my sister and me out to him. I had contracted smallpox, which had made me go blind, so when Ali saw us, he sighed and said:

مَا إِن تَأَوَّهتُ مِن شَیءٍ رُزِیتُ بِهِ کَما تَأَوَّهتُ لِلأَطفالِ فِی الصِّغَرِ
قَد ماتَ وَالِدُهُم مَن کانَ یَکفُلُهُم فِی النائِباتِ وَفِی الاَسفارِ وَالحَضَرِ

"I have never cried 'Argh!'[55] about any loss to me as much as I have cried 'Argh!' for children whose father has died when they are young, he who looked after them in hardship—when traveling and at home." Then he passed his blessed hand over my eyes and I immediately regained my eye-sight. Now, I can see an escaped camel on a dark night.[56]

Ḥātimī, via his chain of transmission, quotes Ibn ʿAbbās as saying:

A black man went to the Master of the Faithful confessing that he had committed theft. [The Imam] questioned him three times and each time he replied: "Master of the Faithful, cleanse me because I have stolen." [The Imam] ordered his fingers (*yadihi*) be chopped off.

Ibn al-Kawwāʾ met him and asked: "Who has chopped off your fingers?" He answered:

لَيْثُ الْحِجَازِ، وَكَبْشُ الْعِرَاقِ، وَمُصَادِمُ الْابْطَالِ، الْمُتَقَمِّ مِنَ الْجُهَّالِ، كَرِيمُ الْاصْلِ، شَرِيفُ
الْفَصْلِ، مُحِلُّ الْحَرَمَيْنِ، وَارِثُ الْمَشْعَرَيْنِ، أَبُو السِّبْطَيْنَ، وَآخِرُ الْوَصِيِّيْنَ مِنْ آلِ يس، الْمُؤَيَّدُ
بِجَبْرَائِيلَ، الْمَنْصُورُ بِمِيكَائِيلَ، الْحَبْلُ الْمَتِينُ، الْمَحُوطُ بِجُنْدِ السَّمَاءِ أَجْمَعِينَ، ذَاكَ وَاللّٰهِ أَمِيرُ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى رَغْمِ الرَّاغِمِينَ.

The lion of the Ḥijāz, the ram of Iraq, the overthrower of the valiant, the avenger against the ignorant, of noble lineage, nobly related by marriage, the custodian of the two Shrines, the inheritor of Muzdalifah and Minā (*al-Mashʿarayn*), the father of the two grandsons [of the Prophet], the first of the foremost and the last executor from the family of Yāsīn, aided by Gabriel and supported by Michael, the strong rope, protected by Heaven's entire army. That, by God, is Imam Ali, in spite of what the reluctant say.

Ibn al-Kawwāʾ said: "He chopped off your fingers but you are still praising him!"

The black man replied: "By God, even if he cut me into pieces, my love for him would only grow."

Then, Ibn al-Kawwāʾ went to Ali and informed him of his meeting with the black man. The [Imam] replied: "Ibn al-Kawwāʾ, even if we cut those who love us into pieces, their love for us would only grow. Among our enemies are those whose hatred for us would grow even if we let them lick butter and honey!"

He told Hasan: "Fetch your black uncle."

Hasan brought the black man to the Master of the Faithful. He took his fingers, put them back, covered them with his robe, and softly uttered words. [The black man's] hand was healed, and he began fighting for the Master of the Faithful, until was martyred at Nahrawān.

It is said that the black man's name was Aflaḥ.[57]

Ibn Makkī says:

أما رَدَّ كَفَّ العَبدِ بَعدَ انقِطاعِها أما رَدَّ عَيناً بَعدَ ما انطَمَسَت طَمساً؟

"Did he not put back the servant's severed fingers (*kaff*)? Did he not restore sight after blindness had taken [it]?"

One of Hishām Ibn ʿAdī al-Hamadānī's hands was cut off at the Battle of Ṣiffīn, so Ali took his hand, recited something, and reattached it. Hishām asked: "Master of the Faithful, what did you recite?" He replied: "The Opening of the Book."

Because Hishām underestimated [the Opening of the Book], his hand split into two, and so Ali left him alone and went away.

Ibn Makkī says:

رَدَدتَ الكَفَّ جَهراً بَعدَ قَطعٍ كَرَدِّ العَينِ مِن بَعدِ الذَّهابِ وَجُمجُمَةُ الجُلَندِی وَهُوَ عَظمٌ رَمیمٌ جاوَبَتكَ عَنِ الخِطابِ

"You publicly reattached the severed hand, just like restoring sight after blindness, and Julandī's skull answering you when you spoke, even though he was rotten bones."

The Imam Travels through the Air to the Cave and Converses with Its Occupants

In their books, Ibn Bābawayh, Abū al-Qāsim Bustī, and Qāḍī Abū Omar Ibn Ahmad narrate that Jābir Ibn ʿAbdillāh Anṣārī and Anas Ibn Mālik said:

Some people criticized Ali in Omar's presence, so Salmān said:

> Omar, do you remember the day when you, Abū Bakr, Abū Dharr, and I were in God's Messenger's presence? He spread a woolen cloth on the ground and each of us sat on a corner of it. Then, he took Ali's hand, sat him down in the middle, and said: "Abū Bakr, stand up and address Ali as Imam and Caliph of the Muslims." Then, he told

all three of us to do the same. Next he said: "Ali, now you stand up and greet this light—the sun." So Ali stood up and said: "Shining sign, peace be upon you." The sun responded, trembled and replied: "And peace be on you!"

God's Messenger then said:

اللّٰهُمَّ إِنَّكَ أَعْطَيْتَ لِأَخِي سُلَيْمَانَ صَفِيِّكَ مُلْكاً وَرِيحاً "غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ". اللّٰهُمَّ أَرْسِلْ تِلْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْكَهْفِ

"O God! You bestowed upon my brother, Solomon, Your two ranks—kingdom and wind *which made a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening*. (34:12) O God! Send [that wind] to take them to the occupants of the cave."

Ali then said: "Wind, carry us." Lo and behold, we were in the air and traveled as far as God pleased. He then said: "Wind, put us down," and so it put us down by the Cave. Each of us stood up and greeted [them], but they did not reply.

Thereafter Ali stood up and said: "Peace be upon you, occupants of the cave!"

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْكَهْفِ

We heard:

وَعَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ يَا وَصِيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

"And peace be upon you, Muhammad's Executor."

They then said: "We have been imprisoned here since the period of Decianus."

[The Imam] asked: "Why did you not return the people's greeting?"

They answered: "We are youths who return the greeting of a prophet or a prophet's executor; you are the executor of the Seal of the Prophets and are the successor to the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds."

Ali then told us: "Sit down," and we did so. He then commanded the wind: "Wind, carry us." Lo and behold we were in the air traveling as far as God pleased. [Ali] then said: "Wind, put us down." So it put us down. Then, he kicked the ground and water gushed out. He performed ablution, as did we, and he said: "You will catch all or part of the prayer with the Prophet."

He then said: "Wind, carry us." He then said: "Put us down," so it put us down. Lo and behold, we were in the Prophet's Mosque, his having already prayed one cycle (*rakᶜah*) of dawn prayer.

Anas says:

Ali called me as a witness [to this incident] from atop the pulpit in Kūfa Mosque, but I dissimulated.

The Imam said: "If you hid it out of dissimulation, in spite of the Prophet's instruction to you, God will give you leprosy in your body, burning in your stomach, and blindness in your eyes."

[Anas says:] "I immediately contracted leprosy and went blind." Since then, Anas could not fast during the month of Ramaḍān or any other.

The rug that Imam Ali was riding on was presented to him by the people of Hirbūq, and the Cave is in the lands of the Byzantines in a place called Arkadī. It was during the reign of Bāhdat, which is now the name of a garden. And it is reported that the woolen cloth was presented [to the Imam] by Kaᶜb's brother, Khuṭayy Ibn al-Ashraf. When he saw the Master of the Faithful's miracles, he became a Muslim and was re-named "Muhammad" by the Prophet.[58]

Khaṭīb Manīḥ says:

وَمَنْ حَمَلَتْهُ رِيحُ اللهِ حَتَّى أَتَى أَهْلَ الرَّقِيمِ الرَّاقِدِينا
وَمَنْ نَادَى بِأَهْلِ الْكَهْفِ حَتَّى أَقَرُّوا بِالْوِلَايَةِ مُفْرَحِينا

He whom God's wind carried until he reached the sleeping people for whom there is an inscription
And who are called the occupants of the Cave, until they cheerfully attested to his Guardianship.[59]

ᶜAwnī says:

عَلِيٌّ كَلِيمُ الْقَوْمِ فِي الْكَهْفِ فَاعْلَمَا وَقَدْ صَمَّ مِنْ شَيْخَاكُمَا الصَّدِيَانِ

Ali is spoken to by the people in the Cave; so know!
And the echo of your two Shaykhs became dumb![60]

ᶜAwnī also says:

وَمَن حَمَلَتْهُ الرِّيحُ فَوقَ بَسَاطِهِ فَاسمَعَ أَهلَ الكَهفِ حِينَ تَكَلَّمَا.[61]

"He whom the wind carried on his rug, and who made the occupants of the Cave hear, when he spoke."

Ḥimyarī says:

لَهُ البِسَاطُ إِذَا سَرَى وَفِتيَةُ الكَهفِ دَعَا
فَمَا أَجَابُوا فِي النِّدَاءِ سِوَى الوَصِيِّ المُرتَضَى[62]

He had a rug when he traveled; and he called the youths of the Cave.
They answered no one's call except the pleasing executor's.

Ḥimyarī says:

سَلْ فِتيَةَ الكَهفِ الَّذِينَ أَتَاهُمُ فَأَيقَظَ فِي رَدِّ السَّلَامِ مَنَامَهُ[63]

"Ask the youths of the Cave whom he came to and whose sleep he disturbed to return [his] greeting."

Barqī says:

حَتَّى إِذَا يَئِسُوا جَوَابَ سَلَامِهِم قَامَ الوَصِيُّ إِلَيهِمُ إِبدَاءَا
قَالَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيكُمُ مِن فِتيَةٍ عَبَدُوا الإِلَهَ وَتَابَعُوا الضِّيَاءَا
قَالُوا عَلَيكَ مِنَ الإِلَهِ تَحِيَّةٌ تُهدَى إِلَيكَ وَرَحمَةٌ وَضِيَاءَا
إِنَّا مُنِعنَا أَن نُكَلِّمَ هَاتِفاً إِلَّا نَبِيّاً كَانَ أَو مَوصَاءَا.[64]

Even when they despaired of their greeting being answered, the Executor stood and initiated
He said: "Peace be upon you, youths, who worshiped God and followed the light!"
They replied: "God's salutation, mercy and light to you.
We are forbidden from speaking out loud, to anyone but a prophet or executor."

Ibn Aṭyas says:

وَطَارِقُ البَابِ عَلَى كَهفِهِم فِي الخَبَرِ المَشهُورِ عَن جَابِرٍ.[65]

"And the knocker at the door to their Cave in the well-known tradition from Jābir."

Ibn al-ᶜAḍud says:

مَن كَلَّمَ الفِتيَةَ فِي الكَهفِ وَلَم يُكَلِّمُوا حَقّاً سِوَاهُ إِذ دَعَا.

"He who spoke to the youths in the Cave; though they had truly never spoken to anyone else when he called."

And Abū al-Fatḥ says:

وَفِي الكَهْفِ مَنقَبَةٌ حُسْنُهَا عَلَى الرَّغْمِ مِن مَعْطَسِ الاذْلَفِ
غَدَاةَ يُسَلِّمُ فِي صَحْبِهِم سَلامَ الصُّحَاةِ عَلَى النُّوَّمِ
فَنَادَوْهُ أَجْمَعَ عَلَيْكَ السَّلامُ فَذَاكَ عَظِيمٌ لِمُسْتَعْظِمِ.[66]

And in the Cave, is an achievement. Its beauty would even make a gloomy-faced man [smile].

In the morning, when [Ali] greeted the Companions of the Cave—the greeting of those awake to those asleep—they all answered: "Peace be upon you." For anyone who considers this virtue to be great, it really is great.

Ali Raises a Dead Man

There is a hadith from Salmān Shalqān,[67] who says:

I heard Imam Ṣādiq say:

> The Master of the Faithful had maternal uncles among the Banī Makhzūm. One of their youths came to the Imam saying: "Uncle, my twin brother has died and now I am very sad about him." The Imam asked: "Would you like to see him?" He answered: "Yes, I would." The Holiness told him: "Show me his grave." [The Imam] stood up and wrapped his head with God's Messenger's guarantee-of-an-answer [prayer] shawl. When he reached the grave, he spoke with his lips and kicked it, and my brother stood up, speaking Persian, in the grave. Ali asked: "Didn't you die an Arab?" He replied: "Yes, but we died following the tradition of So-and-So and So-and-So, so our language was changed."[68]

Ḥimyarī says:

قَالَ لَهُ فَرْمَانُ: عِيسَى بْنُ مَرْيَمَ بِزَعْمِكَ يُحْيِي كُلَّ مَيْتٍ وَمُقْبَرِ
فَمَاذَا الَّذِي أُعْطِيتَ؟ قَالَ مُحَمَّدٌ لِمِثْلِ الَّذِي أُعْطَاهُ إِنْ شِئْتَ فَانْظُرِ
إِلَى مِثْلِ مَا أُعْطِي قَالُوا لِكُفْرِهِمْ أَلا إِرْنَا مَا قُلْتَ غَيْرَ مُعَذَّرِ
فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ قُمْ لِوَصِيِّهِ فَقَامَ وَقَدْ مَا كَانَ غَيْرَ مُقَصِّرِ
وَرَدَّاهُ بِالْمِحْرَابِ وَاللهُ خَصَّهُ وَقَالَ اتْبَعُوهُ بِالدُّعَاءِ الْمُبَرِّرِ

فَلَمَّا أَتَى ظَهْرَ الْبَقِيعِ دَعَا بِهِ فَرَجَّتْ قُبُورُ الْوَرَى لَمْ تَتَغَيَّرْ
فَقَالُوا لَهُ: يَا وَارِثَ الْعِلْمِ اعْفِنَا وَمُنَّ عَلَيْنَا بِالرِّضَا مِنْكَ وَاغْفِرْ[69]

1. So a decree said to him: "Jesus son of Mary according to your claim raises every dead and buried?
2. And what have you been given?" Muhammad said: "Look, at the like of what he was given if you will."
3. "Just show us what you have said, without making any excuses."
4. God's Messenger said "Stand up," to his Executor. He stood up, for he was never remiss.
5. And he wrapped him in his guarantee-of-an-answer [prayer shawl] and said: "Follow it with prayer made reverent."
6. When he arrived at the outskirts of the Baqī', he prayed in it and the untouched graves began shaking.
7. They then said: "Inheritor of knowledge, forgive us! Favor us with your contentment and forgive!"

Then, Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "The prophets' and executors' healing the sick and raising the dead were the Exalted God's doing."

Jesus said:

وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللهِ

...and I heal those born blind and lepers and raise the dead by God's leave... (3:49)

[God says:]

وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي... وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي

...and when you create from clay as the likeness of a bird by My leave...and when you raise the dead by My leave. (5:110).

[The Qur'an says:]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِ الْمَوْتَى قَالَ: أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قَالَ بَلَى وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِنَ الطَّيْرِ...

...and Abraham said, "My Lord! Show me how raise the dead." He said: "Why? Do you not believe?" "Yes," he replied, "But so my heart is put at rest." He said: "Take four birds..." (2:260)

The story of 'Uzayr or Irmiyā says:

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ... قَدِيرٌ

...or like he who passed by a town...Powerful... (2:259).

Similarly the story of the Israelites says:

وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ قَالَ لَهُمُ اللهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ.[70]

...in their thousands fearing death and God told them, "Die," then raised them. (2:243)

Three Thousand Angels Greet Ali in a Single Night

Muhammad Ibn Thābit, via his chain of transmission from Ibn Masʿūd, and the exegete Falakī via his chain of transmission from Muhammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah narrate:

> At the Battle of Badr, God's Messenger sent Ali for water when his companions stopped looking. Then, when he reached the well, filled the water-skin and took it out, a wind came and spilled it. He then went back to the well, filled the water-skin and took it out, but a wind spilled it. The same thing happened a third time. The fourth time, he filled it, took it to the Prophet, and told him his story.
>
> God's Messenger then said: "The first wind was Gabriel, with a thousand angels to greet you. The second wind was Michael, with a thousand angels to greet you. The third wind was Raphael with a thousand angels to greet you."

Another hadith says: "They only came to protect you."

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Ṣāliḥ narrates via his chain of transmission from Layth, saying: "Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib achieved 3003 feats in a single night." He then tells this story.[71]

Sayyid Ḥimyarī says:

أُقْسِمُ بِاللهِ وَآلَائِهِ وَالْمَرْءُ عَمَّا قَالَ مَسْؤُولُ
إِنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَى التُّقَى وَالْبِرِّ مَجْبُولُ
كَانَ إِذَا الْحَرْبُ مَرَتْهَا الْقَنَا وَاحْجَمَتْ عَنْهَا الْبَهَالِيلُ
يَمْشِي إِلَى الْقِرْنِ وَفِي كَفِّهِ أَبْيَضُ مَاضِي الْحَدِّ مَصْقُولُ
مَشْيَ الْعَقَرْنَا بَيْنَ أَشْبَالِهِ أَبْرَزَهُ لِلْقَنْصِ الْغِيلُ
ذَاكَ الَّذِي سَلَّمَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ عَلَيْهِ مِيكَالُ وَجِبْرِيلُ
مِيكَالُ فِي أَلْفٍ وَجِبْرِيلُ فِي أَلْفٍ وَيَتْلُوهُمْ سِرَافِيلُ
لَيْلَةَ بَدْرٍ مَدَداً أُنْزِلُوا كَأَنَّهُمْ طَيْرٌ أَبَابِيلُ[72]

1. I swear by God and His blessings and man is responsible for what he says,
2. Surely goodness and virtue is in Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's nature.
3. When war broke out and the buffoons turned away from it,
4. Towards his match, holding the sharp and polished sword in his hand, he would walk
5. The walk of a fierce lion between his cubs—exposed to the hunt by the reed cover.
6. That is he who was greeted by Michael and Gabriel in a single night,
7. Michael with a thousand [angels], Gabriel with a thousand [angels] followed by Raphael.
8. On the eve of Badr they were sent down as support as if they were birds in flocks.

Ḥimyarī also says:

وَسَلَّمَ جِبريلُ وَمِيكَالُ لَيْلَةً عَلَيْهِ وَحَيَّاهُ سرافيلُ مُعْرِباً
أَحَاطُوا بِهِ فِي رَدْهِ جاءَ يَسْتَقِي وَكَانَ على أَلْفٍ بِهَا قَدْ تَحَزَّبَا[73]
ثَلَاثَةُ آلَافٍ مَلَائِكَ سَلَّمُوا عَلَيْهِ فَأَدْنَاهُمْ وَحَيَّا وَرَحَّبَا.[74]

One night, Gabriel and Michael greeted Ali, and Raphael clearly saluted him;

They guarded Ali, who was going to bring some water, each of them heading a thousand angels in a party he had formed.

Three thousand angels saluted him; Ali had approached them, and greeted and saluted them.

Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī[75] quotes from *Manāqib Āl Ahmad*, and Qundūzī Ḥanafī[76] narrates from Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad* that Ali said:

لَيْلَةَ فِي بَدْرٍ لَكَانَتْ

and Ṭabarī states

لَيْلَةَ يَوْمِ بَدْرٍ:
قَالَ رسولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: مَنْ يَسْتَسْقِ لَنَا مِنَ الماء؟ فَمَا أَجَابَ النَّاسُ

Ṭabarī says:

فَاحْتَجَمَ النَّاسُ

قَالَ عَلِيٌّ: انا يا رسولَ اللهِ، فَاحْتَضَنَ قِرْبَةً ثُمَّ أَتَى بِئراً بَعِيدَةَ القَعرِ مُظْلِمَةً فَانْحَدَرَ فيها، فَأَوحَى اللهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ إلى جِبرائيلَ وَمِيكائيلَ وَاسرافيلَ تأهَّبوا لِنَصرِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَجِزْبِهِ، فَهَبَطوا مِنَ السَّماءِ

Ṭabarī says:

لَهُم لَغَطٌ يَذْعَرُ مَنْ سَمِعَهُ

فَلَمّا حاذُوا البِئرَ سَلَّموا عَلى عَلِيٍّ مِن عِندِ رَبِّهِم

According to Ṭabarī:

(سَلَّموا عَلَيْهِ مِن عِندِ آخِرِهِم إكراماً وَتَبجيلاً)

> At night at Badr [Ṭabarī: "the night before the Battle of Badr"], the Prophet asked: "Who is going to bring water for us?" The people did not answer [Ṭabarī: The people remained silent"]. However, the Master of the Faithful said: "I will, God's Messenger." He hugged the water-skin to his chest and went to a deep-pitted, dark well. He went down into it. God then revealed to Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael that they must get ready to help Muhammad and his companions. They then came down from Heaven. [Ṭabarī: "They made a strange noise that frightened anyone who heard it"]. When they reached the well, they passed their Lord's greetings on to Ali [Ṭabarī: "They all, down to their last one, respectfully and proudly greeted him"].

It is related in *Jamᶜ al-Fawāʾid*: There is a hadith on the authority of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and Mawṣilī[77] quoting Imam Ali as saying:

قالَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السّلام: كُنتُ على قَليبِ بَدرٍ أَمتَحُ مِنهُ ماءً جاءَتْ رِيحٌ شَديدَةٌ ثُمَّ جاءَت رِيحٌ شَديدَةٌ ثُمَّ جاءَت رِيحٌ شَديدَةٌ فَكانَتِ الأولى مِيكائيلَ والثّانِيَةُ إسرافيلَ وَالثّالِثَةُ جَبرائيلَ مَعَ كُلِّ واحِدٍ مِنهُم أَلفٌ مِنَ المَلائِكَةِ فَسَلَّموا عَلَيَّ

"I was at the well at Badr, reeling and fetching water from it. A strong wind blew. Then another strong wind blew, and then another strong wind blew. The first wind was Michael, the second Raphael, and the third was Gabriel. A thousand angels were with each of them and they greeted me."

The poet says about this:

أعني الَّذي سَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ جَبرائيلُ في لَيْلَةِ بَدرٍ وَمِيكائيلُ وَاسرافيلُ[78]

"Surely I am he whom Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael greeted on the eve of Badr."

Al-Manāqib by Ibn Shahr Āshūb says via its chain of transmission from Aᶜmash that Sālim Ibn Abī al-Juhd quotes Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī as saying:

إِنَّ عَلِيًّا قَالَ لِأَصْحَابِ الشُّورى: هَلْ فِيكُم مَنْ سَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ فِي سَاعَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثَلَاثَةُ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَفِيهِم جَبْرَائِيلُ وَمِيكَائِيلُ وَإِسْرَافِيلُ لَيْلَةً فِي قَلِيبِ بَدْرٍ مِثْلِي لَمَّا جِئْتُ بِالْمَاءِ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ؟ قَالُوا: لَا. نقله أيضاً ابن مسعود.[79]

"Surely Ali said to the members of the Council: 'Is there among you anyone, like me, who has been greeted by 3000 angels in a single hour, including Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael at the Well of Badr when I brought the water to God's Messenger?' All of them replied: 'No.'" Ibn Masʿūd also narrates it.

Al-Iṣābah says on the authority of Fāyid, ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām's freedman: "The Prophet stayed at Juḥfah at the Battle of Ḥudaybiyyah, and could not find any water. He then sent Saʿd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, but he returned without any water and apologized. He sent Ali, and he did not return until he had filled the water-skin with water.

Ali Splits Stone

Stone miraculously split for Imam Ali as it had for Moses. On the way to Ṣiffīn, Imam Ali's army was overcome with thirst, so he ordered a well be dug. They dug until they reached a big rock that they could not break or pull out. The Imam came and dealt it a single blow, splitting it, unbroken though it was by a thousand blows. Sweet, cold water gushed out from under the rock, and rose, overflowing the well. Everyone drank, quenching their thirst, astonished by this miracle and the amazing spectacle they had seen.

Khaṭīb Baghdādī narrates this event via his chain of transmission from Abū Saʿīd ʿAqīṣā in *Tārikh Baghdād* (vol. 12, p. 305). He says:

> We were going from Anbār to Kūfa with Ali. The people were overcome by thirst. When we were traveling along the bank of the Euphrates, he started trekking into the desert, followed by some of his companions, while others carried on along the bank. I was one of those who traveled with Ali until we were in the middle of the desert. People said: "Master of the Faithful, we are afraid of dehydration." He replied: "God will give you water, and there is a monk near us."
>
> Ali then came to the place and said: "Dig here." We dug. I was one of the diggers. We reached rock. Ali said: "Lift away this rock." They helped us lift it, and, to our surprise, there was a fresh cold-water spring. We drank, and then traveled on one night or thereabouts. We became thirsty.

Some people said: "Why don't we go back and drink?" Some people went back, and I was one of them. We then reached it, but we could not get at it.

We went to the monk and asked him: "Where is the spring that was here?" He asked: "What spring?"

We said: "The spring we drank from, sought to get [more] water from and reached, but now cannot get at."

The monk said: "No one but a prophet or prophet's executor can extract it!"

ᶜAllāmah Amīnī tells this story slightly differently in *al-Ghadīr* (vol. 3, p. 393), quoting from *Ṣiffīn* by Naṣr Ibn Muzāḥim. At the end, he says: "Khaṭīb mentions it in *Tārikh Baghdād* (*The History of Baghdad*)."

Ḥimyarī says about the incident:

وَمَنْ حَمَلَتْهُ الرِّيحُ فَوْقَ سَحَابَةٍ بِقُدْرَةِ رَبٍّ قَدْرَ مَنْ شَاءَ يَرْفَعُ
وَمَنْ بِأَصْحَابِ الرَّقِيمِ مُسَلِّماً فَرَدُّوا مِنَ الْكَهْفِ السَّلَامَ فَأَسْمَعُوا
وَمَنْ فَجَّرَ الصَّخْرَ الْأَصَمَّ لِجُنْدِهِ فَفَاضَ مَعِيناً مِنْهُ لِلْقَوْمِ يَنْبُعُ
وَمَنْ لِصَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ عِنْدَ غُرُوبِهَا تُرَدُّ لَهُ الشَّمْسُ بَيْضَاءُ تَلْمَعُ
فَصَلَّى صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ ثُمَّ انْثَنَتْ لَهُ تَسِيرُ كَسَيْرِ الْبَرْقِ وَالْبَرْقُ مُسْرِعُ
فَيَا لَائِمِي فِي حُبِّهِمْ كُفَّ إِنَّنِي بِحُبِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَوُلَّعُ
وَلَا دِينَ إِلَّا حُبُّ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَلَا شَيْءَ مِنْهُ فِي الْقِيَامَةِ أَنْفَعُ
إِذَا الْعَدْلُ وَالتَّوْحِيدُ كَانَا وَحُبُّهُ بِقَلْبِي فَإِنِّي الْعَابِدُ الْمُتَطَوِّعُ
أَنَا السَّيِّدُ الْقَوَّالُ فِيهِمْ مَدَائِحاً ثُمَّ بِقَلْبِ النَّاصِبِينَ تَصَدَّعُ.[80]

He whom the wind carried, atop a cloud,
Through the power of a Lord who enables whomever He wishes to be raised;
He passed by those for whom there is an inscription,
Greeting them, and they greeted him back audibly from the cave.
He who split the hard rock, for his army,
And fresh water sprang out for them.
He for whom the bright shining sun is brought back, to pray the afternoon prayer at sunset.

So he prayed the afternoon prayer and the sun bowed for him, traveling
like lightning—and lightning is fast.
Critic of me for my love for him,
Stop, because I shine with love for Imam Ali.
I follow no religion except love for Muhammad's Family
And nothing is of greater benefit at the Resurrection

If justice, monotheism, and love for him
Are in my heart, I am an obedient worshipper.
I am the master who ever utters praises for them
Which pass by the hearts of the enemies and proclaim.

The above was a summary of the Master of the Faithful's miracles. If we wanted to take all the miracles of all the prophets and compare them one by one with Ali's miracles, then we would have to write another book just to do so. However, it has become clear to us, in broad terms, that with God's permission, the Imam was capable of performing all their miracles. Like God's Messenger, he had a status and position unreachable by any prophet.

Ali Was Tried and Tested More Than All the Prophets

However, we must know that his divine attributes, perfections of the soul, and God-given power were not given to the Imam for nothing. He was awarded them after physical perils and mighty trials not endured by any prophet. Every suffering of the prophets, their hardships, the people's blaming and mocking them and pushing them out of their towns and exiling and killing them, apostasy from their religions, having to suffer fools, and so on were also endured and suffered by God's Messenger. As he himself said:

مَا أُوذِيَ نَبِيٌّ مِثْلَ مَا اوذيتُ

"No messenger has suffered as I have!"

All this was inherited by Imam Ali. He was never free from harassment, from his childhood right up until he was struck on the head while praying in the prayer niche (*miḥrāb*). It was the same in Holy Mecca, later in Medina, and even worse, in the 25 years of darkness after God's Messenger's death, and even persisted when the Imam held public office as head of state.

Ishmael was tested with the threat of slaughter, which was ultimately not followed through on. Ali volunteered to take the Prophet's place in his bed on the perilous night when he migrated. He prepared

himself to meet the sharp swords of the Arab tribes—every second risking being martyred.

Abraham was tested with 24 trials, the most difficult of which was being commanded to slaughter his son, Ishmael. Imam Ali knew for certain that Fāṭimah's children—Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn—would be martyred, the latter at Karbalā. He, time and again, would speak about it and weep. But it was a covenant that God and His Prophet had made with him. He accepted it and swore to support God's rules and laws.

On the basis of

البلاءُ بقدرِ الولاء.

"Suffering is commensurate with saintliness," his suffering was greater than all the prophets', and so were his patience and struggles.

May God bless you, Abū al-Hasan!

Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī, in *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ* (vol. 1, pp. 66–67), via his chain of transmission, quotes Abū Burzah as saying:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ اللهَ عَهِدَ إِلَيَّ عَهْداً فِي عَلِيٍّ، قُلْتُ: يَا رَبِّ بَيِّنْهُ لِي، قَالَ: اسْمَعْ، قُلْتُ: سَمِعْتُ: قَالَ: إِنَّ عَلِيّاً رَايَةُ الْهُدَى وَإِمَامُ أَوْلِيَائِي وَنُورُ مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي وَهُوَ الْكَلِمَةُ الَّتِي أَلْزَمْتُهَا الْمُتَّقِينَ، مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ أَحَبَّنِي وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَهُ أَبْغَضَنِي، فَبَشِّرْهُ بِذَلِكَ فَجَاءَ عَلِيٌّ فَبَشَّرْتُهُ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ وَفِي قَبْضَتِهِ فَإِنْ يُعَذِّبْنِي فَبِذَنْبِي وَإِنْ يُتِمَّ لِي الَّذِي بَشَّرْتَنِي بِهِ فَاللهُ أَوْلَى بِي. قَالَ: قُلْتُ اللهُمَّ اجْعَلْ قَلْبَهُ وَاجْعَلْ رَبِيعَهُ الإِيمَانَ. فَقَالَ اللهُ: قَدْ فَعَلْتُ بِهِ ذَلِكَ. ثُمَّ إِنَّهُ رَفَعَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ سَيُخَصُّ مِنَ الْبَلاءِ بِشَيءٍ وَلَمْ يُخَصَّ بِهِ أَحَداً مِنْ أَصْحَابِي، قُلْتُ: يَا رَبِّ أَخِي وَصَاحِبِي! فَقَالَ: إِنَّ هَذَا شَيءٌ قَدْ سَبَقَ أَنَّهُ مُبْتَلًى وَمُبْتَلًى بِهِ.

God's Messenger said: "God made a covenant with me about Ali." I said: "O Lord, explain it to me." He replied: "Listen." I said: "I'm listening." He said: "Ali is indeed the banner of guidance, and the Imam of My saints, the light of whoever obeys me. He is the word by which I have bound the righteous. Whoever loves him, loves Me, and whoever hates him, hates Me. So give him the glad tidings of that."

Ali then came and I gave him the glad tidings. Thereafter, he said: "God's Messenger, I am God's servant and I am in His Hands. If He punishes me it will be for my sin, but if what you have given me the glad tidings of comes to pass, God has greater authority over me."

I said: "O God, light up his heart and make faith his heart's desire." God said: "I have done so." He then told me that He would exclusively try him with what He had not tried any of my companions. I said: "Lord, my brother and companion!" He replied: "This is what has already been appointed—he will be tested and be a test for others."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb[81] tells the story of God's Messenger's migration from Mecca to Medina, as does Muẓaffar in *Dalā'il al-Ṣidq*.[82] Now, we are going to quote Ibn Shahr Āshūb:

God's Messenger said to the Master of the Faithful, Ali:

إنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى أَوْحَى إِلَيَّ أَنِ اهْجُرْ دَارَ قَوْمِي وَأَنْ أَنْطَلِقَ إِلَى غَارِ ثَوْرٍ فَارْقُدْ عَلَى فِرَاشِي وَاشْتَمِلْ بِبُرْدِيَ الْحَضْرَمِيِّ وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللهَ يَمْتَحِنُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَمَنَازِلِهِمْ مِنْ دِينِهِ فَأَشَدُّ النَّاسِ بَلَاءً الْأَنْبِيَاءُ ثُمَّ الْأَمْثَلُ فَالْأَمْثَلُ. وَقَدِ امْتَحَنَكَ يَا ابْنَ أُمِّ وَامْتَحَنَنِي بِمِثْلِ مَا امْتَحَنَ بِهِ خَلِيلَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالذَّبِيحَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، فَصَبْراً صَبْراً فَإِنَّ رَحْمَةَ اللهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ. ثُمَّ ضَمَّهُ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ وَأَوْصَاهُ بِقَضَاءِ دُيُونِهِ وَإِنْجَازِ عِدَاتِهِ وَرَدِّ الْوَدَائِعِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا ثُمَّ خَرَجَ. الحديث

God, the Blessed and Exalted, has enjoined me to leave my people's home and set off for Thawr Cave. Now, Ali, lie in my bed and spread my Ḥaḍramī robe over yourself; know that God tests His saints according to their faith and statuses in His religion. The people tested most are the prophets, followed by the next most ideal, followed by the next most ideal. He has tested you, son of my mother, and tested me with the like of what He tested His friend Abraham and his son, Ishmael, the sacrifice. Patience, patience, for God's mercy is close to the good-doers.

He then hugged him to his chest and instructed him to pay his debts, keep his promises [for him] and return the trusts to their owners. He then left...

Three inferences can be drawn from the matters we have just set out: Firstly the Prophet's greatness and vast knowledge of the Glorious Qur'an, secondly his greatness and spiritual potential as regards creationary decree, manifestation of miracles, and intervention in creatures' affairs and elements, and, thirdly the greatness of his trials and tribulations.

Imam Ali Inherited All the Prophets' Perfection

Thus, it is clear that God's Messenger was greater and stronger than all the other prophets in terms of all three stages, and the Master of the Faithful inherited his greatness in all three. Therefore, Ali is more knowledgeable than all the prophets and their executors on both the legislative Book and creationary [decree]. He is stronger in God's Essence, riper and more melted, and, through the Real's eternity, greater and vaster.

Here the Muʿtazilite commentator on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, reveals and acknowledges Ali's superiority to all the favored angels, prophets, and envoys:

قد قُلتُ لِلبَرقِ الَّذي شَقَّ الدُجى فَكَأَنَّ زَنجِيّاً هُناكَ يُجَدَّعُ
يا بَرقُ إِن جِئتَ الغَرِيَّ فَقُل لَهُ أَتُراكَ تَعلَمُ مَن بِأَرضِكَ مودَعُ
فِيكَ ابنُ عِمرانَ الكَلِيمُ وَتَحتَهُ عيسى يُقَفِّيهِ وَأَحمَدُ يَتبَعُ
بَل فِيكَ جِبرِيلُ وَمِيكالُ وَاس رافيلُ وَالمَلأُ المُقَدَّسُ أَجمَعُ
بَل فِيكَ نُورُ اللهِ جَلَّ جَلالُهُ لِذَوِي البَصائِرِ تَستَشِفُّ وَتَلمَعُ
فِيكَ الإِمامُ المُرتَضى فِيكَ الوَصِيُّ المُجتَبى فِيكَ البَطِينُ الأَنزَعُ[83]

1. I said to the lightning that split the darkness like a black having his nose cut off!
2. "Lightning, if you arrive at al-Gharī [Najaf], ask it: 'Do you think you know who is deposited in your earth?!
3. "'Within you, is the son of Imran, spoken to [by God], next Jesus followed by Aḥmad.
4. "'Rather, within you is Gabriel, Michael, Raphae,l and the whole heavenly host.
5. "'Rather, within you is God's Light, Sublime is His Splendor shimmering and shining for those with insight.
6. "'Within you is the approved Imam, the chosen executor. Within you is the pot-bellied[84] man with the receding hairline!'"

Because Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd was Muʿtazilite, and Muʿtazilites believe the angels to be superior to the prophets, he mentions Moses, Jesus, and Muhammadand first, then escalates to Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, and the whole heavenly host.

Yes, this is the status and position of our master Ali, who is the deputy of the chosen beloved Muhammad's self. Rather, he is one and the same, spiritually and essentially, i.e. the greatest absolute divine

authority, the witness to the law of all being and to the life and times of the prophets.

Imam Ali's Sermon, Which Says That the Imams Should Be Put on the Same Best Level as the Qur'an

We find that in one of his sermons, the Imam warns the people against following evil scholars, who deceive people with their appearance, and incentivizes them to follow the Greatest Messenger's close family. He explicitly states that they are the natural extension of God's Messenger. He wants to make the people understand that the Prophet is not dead and that he (the Imam) is present among them.

After explaining the attributes God's Saints manifest, he states:

وَآخَرُ قَدْ تَسَمّٰى عَالِمًا لَيْسَ بِهِ فَاقْتَبَسَ جَهَائِلَ مِنْ جُهَّالٍ وَأَضَالِيلَ مِنْ ضُلَّالٍ، وَنَصَبَ لِلنَّاسِ شِرَكًا مِنْ حَبَائِلِ غُرُورٍ وَقَوْلِ زُورٍ، قَدْ حَمَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى آرَائِهِ وَعَطَفَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى أَهْوَائِهِ، يُؤَمِّنُ مِنَ الْعَظَائِمِ وَيُهَوِّنُ كَبِيرَ الْجَرَائِمِ، يَقُولُ: أَقِفُ عِنْدَ الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَفِيهَا وَقَعَ، وَأَعْتَزِلُ الْبِدَعَ، وَبَيْنَهَا اضْطَجَعَ فَالصُّورَةُ صُورَةُ إِنْسَانٍ وَالْقَلْبُ قَلْبُ حَيَوَانٍ، لَا يَعْرِفُ بَابَ الْهُدَى فَيَتَّبِعَهُ، وَلَا بَابَ الْعَمَى فَيَصُدَّ عَنْهُ، فَذَلِكَ مَيِّتُ الْأَحْيَاءِ فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ وَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ؟ وَالْأَعْلَامُ قَائِمَةٌ وَالْآيَاتُ وَاضِحَةٌ وَالْمَنَارُ مَنْصُوبَةٌ، فَأَيْنَ يُتَاهُ بِكُمْ بَلْ كَيْفَ تَعْمَهُونَ؟ وَبَيْنَكُمْ عِتْرَةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ وَهُمْ أَزِمَّةُ الْحَقِّ وَأَعْلَامُ الدِّينِ وَأَلْسِنَةُ الصِّدْقِ، فَأَنْزِلُوهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَنَازِلِ الْقُرْآنِ، وَرِدُوهُمْ وُرُودَ الْهِيمِ الْعِطَاشِ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ خُذُوهَا عَنْ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّهُ يَمُوتُ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنَّا وَلَيْسَ بِمَيِّتٍ، وَيَبْلَى مَنْ بَلِيَ مِنَّا وَلَيْسَ بِبَالٍ» فَلَا تَقُولُوا بِمَا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَ الْحَقِّ فِيمَا تُنْكِرُونَ، وَاعْذِرُوا مَنْ لَا حُجَّةَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنَا هُوَ.[85]

Another calls himself learned, but he is not so; he has learned ignorance from the ignorant and misguidance from the misguided. He has set a trap for the people, of ropes of deceit and false words. He has interpreted the Book according to his views and bound the truth to his desires.

He makes [people] feel safe in committing major sins and makes light of serious crimes. He says: "I pause when in doubt," but plunges in, and, "I stay away from innovations," but lies amongst them!

His form is a human form, but his heart is an animal's heart.

He knows not the door of guidance to follow, or the door of error to avoid—this man is a dead man among the living.

Whither will you then go? (81:26) *How are you then perverted?* (6:95; 10:34; 35:3; 40:62) The banners are erect and the signs are clear, and the lighthouses are set up!

So, where are you being taken astray and how can you grope when the Prophet's close family is among you, the reins of truth, the banners of the religion, and the tongues of truthfulness? Put them on the same best level as the Qur'an, and come to them like thirsty [camels].

People! Take it from the Seal of the Prophets: "Whoever of us dies is not dead and whoever of us decays, does not really decay." Do not say what you do not know because most of the truth is in what you deny. Excuse him against whom you have no excuse, namely me.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd has totally misinterpreted and missed the point of the last two sentences.

He says:

God's Messenger's words could be interpreted in two ways: One: Our dead do not really die. Instead God raises them up to the kingdom of Heaven; therefore, if someone dug up their graves he would not find their bodies in the ground. However, this explanation is not compatible with the second sentence, which says: "Whoever of us decays, does not really decay." It would have to imply:

وَبَلَى كَفَنُ مَنْ بَلِيَ مِنَّا

"But the burial shroud of whoever of us decays does decay."

Two: There are particles fundamental to a man's existence. The Exalted God takes those fundamental particles from the Prophet's and Imams' graves, to honor and glorify them, raising them up to Him, after creating further parts similar to the ones they had in the world so they become complete persons, the same as those of the Household who have died. That is why they never [truly] die.[86]

But with a little consideration it is clear that the author of the commentary has misunderstood. Ali did not in this sermon wish to explain one of the Noblest Messenger's hadiths. Instead, when he asked people to refer to the [Prophet's] close family, i.e. himself, he just cited this hadith as evidence in support of what he had said. He meant: "If you do not believe me, then listen to what the Prophet said, [paraphrasing]: We do not die. On the contrary, we live forever." In other

words it is as if my (the Imam's) presence is the Prophet's presence and a continuation of his life. People, the Prophet did not really die when he died, because I am alive among you, and my life is the Prophet's life. In other words, he means that he is a perfect mirror image of that essence that was the Prophet, a perfect mirror image in every respect. That essence is the greatest absolute divine authority that was manifested in the Prophet during his lifetime. He was a perfect manifestation of the divine attributes, and today they have been manifested in me. The Messenger's words mean that bodily death and decay in the earth do not mean the death and decay of that divine knowledge and teaching from the Lord or [death and decay] of power over the world of existence and hence to that authority. It is alive and eternal because our soul is eternal. That life is our soul, which is manifested in our executor. This is the true meaning of what Imam Ali inherited from God's Messenger, as per:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا.

...Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. (35:32)

Proof of this is the fact that the Imam says next:

فَلَا تَقُولُوا إِمَّا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَ الْحَقِّ فِيمَا تُنْكِرُونَ، وَاعْذِرُوا مَنْ لَا حُجَّةَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنَا هُوَ.

"People! Do not say what you do not know, because most of the truth is in what you deny. Excuse him against whom you have no excuse, namely me."

Imam Ali's Words: "I Was a Neighbor, Whose Body Neighbored You for a Few Days"

Further evidence is what he says in his testamentary instruction after having been struck in the mosque: that his body, not his spirit, was with the people. That body will have no soul and will be still. All the powers that were manifested in him were from the Holy Divine Essence. All the knowledge, miracles, and perfection will return to the Source of Perfection—and this is the best warning.

وَإِنَّمَا كُنْتُ جَارًا جَاوَرَكُمْ بَدَنِي أَيَّامًا، وَسَتُعْقَبُونَ مِنِّي جُثَّةً خَلَاءً، سَاكِنَةً بَعْدَ حَرَاكٍ، وَصَامِتَةً بَعْدَ نُطْقٍ، لِيَعِظَكُمْ هُدُوِّي وَخُفُوتُ إِطْرَاقِي، وَسُكُونُ أَطْرَافِي، فَإِنَّهُ أَوْعَظُ لِلْمُعْتَبِرِينَ مِنَ الْمَنْطِقِ الْبَلِيغِ وَالْقَوْلِ الْمَسْمُوعِ.[87]

O people, I was a neighbor, whose body neighbored you for a few days. An empty body of mine will be left for you—motionless after having been mobile, and it will be speechless after having spoken. The droopiness of my eyelids and the stillness of my limbs should warn you, because it is a better warning, for those ready to learn, than eloquent speech or audible words.

To summarize what we have said so far: Ali inherited all the Prophet's perfection. All the light and illumination except prophecy, which ended with God's Messenger, passed to the pure and bright heart of Ali; this is the true meaning of the exegetical hadith narrated by the Sunnis:

Ali said about:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا، نَحْنُ أُولَئِكَ.[88]

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen (35:32): "We are those [people] ..."

Or, as narrated by Ibn Mardawayh: "We are they."

The Imams Are the Inheritors of God's Book

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī quotes Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī as saying about Imam Sajjād:

قَالَ: إِنِّي جَالِسٌ عِنْدَهُ إِذْ جَاءَهُ رَجُلَانِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِرَاقِ فَقَالَا: يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللهِ جِئْنَاكَ (كَيْ) تُخْبِرَنَا عَنْ آيَاتٍ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، فَقَالَ: وَمَا هِيَ؟ قَالَا: قَوْلُ اللهِ تَعَالَى: «ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا». فَقَالَ: يَا أَهْلَ الْعِرَاقِ! وَأَيْشٍ يَقُولُونَ؟ قَالَا: يَقُولُونَ إِنَّهَا نَزَلَتْ فِي أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ: أُمَّةُ مُحَمَّدٍ كُلُّهُمْ إِذَا فِي الْجَنَّةِ؟! قَالَ: قُلْتُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْقَوْمِ: يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللهِ فِيمَنْ نَزَلَتْ؟ فَقَالَ: نَزَلَتْ وَاللهِ فِينَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ. ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ. قُلْتُ: أَخْبِرْنَا مَنْ فِيكُمُ الظَّالِمُ لِنَفْسِهِ؟ قَالَ: الَّذِي اسْتَوَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ وَسَيِّئَاتُهُ. وَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ. قُلْتُ: وَالْمُقْتَصِدُ؟ قَالَ: الْعَابِدُ لِلهِ فِي بَيْتِهِ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَهُ الْيَقِينُ. قُلْتُ: السَّابِقُ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ؟ قَالَ: مَنْ شَهَرَ سَيْفَهُ وَدَعَا إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّهِ.[89]

I was sitting with him when two Iraqis came and said: "God's Messenger's son, we have come for you to tell us about some verses of the Qur'an."

He asked: "Which ones?"

They said: "The Exalted God's words:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا...

...Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those...whom We had chosen...

He asked: "Iraqis! What do [people] say?"

They answered: "They say that it was revealed about Muhammad's entire nation."

Ali Ibn al-Husayn asked: "Then, is Muhammad's entire nation going to Heaven?"

[Abū Ḥamzah says]: Out of all the people, I asked, "God's Messenger's son, about whom was it revealed?"

He repeated three times: "By God, it was revealed about us, the Household."

I said: "Tell us who among you wrongs himself."

He said: "He who has done as many good deeds as bad deeds but is still going to Heaven!"

I asked: "And he who follows a middle course?"

He said: "He who worships God at home until death (*al-yaqin*) comes to him."

I asked: "The foremost in good deeds?"

He answered: "He who draws his sword and invites [the people] to the path of his Lord."

Imam Riḍā presented a similar argument to Maʾmūn when he told him that the Inheritors of the Book means them, the Prophet's close family, and no one else. This was part of a long hadith in which Imam Riḍā, in Maʾmūn's court, proved from the Qurʾan that the holy family had twelve distinguishing characteristics.

Ṣadūq cites this hadith in full in *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*[90], and Sayyid Baḥrānī cites a brief extract from it in *Ghāyat al-Marām*[91] as evidence of the inheritance. Majlisī cites an abridged version of it, on the authority of *Tafsīr Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm*, quoting Abān Ibn Ṣalt.[92]

Majlisī says:

Sayyid Ali Ibn Ṭāwūs says in *Sa'd al-Su'ūd*: I have found many hadiths and cited some of them in *al-Bahjah bi Thamrat al-Muhjah* that say that:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِن عِبَادِنَا ـ الآية ـ

Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen (35:32) means all the Prophet's offspring. He who wrongs himself means him who does not know the Imam of his time. He who follows a middle course means him who knows him. The foremost in good deeds is the Imam of the time."

We cite this on the authority of Shaykh Abū Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Bābawayh, from his book *al-Firaq* via his chain of transmission from Imam Ṣādiq, *al-Wāḥidah*, by Ibn Abī Jumhūr, on the authority of Abū Muhammad al-Hasan Ibn 'Alī al-'Askarī, *al-Dalā'il* by 'Abdullāh Ibn Ja'far Ḥimyarī, quoting Imam Hasan al-'Askarī, Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Riyāḥ's book, via his chain of transmission from Imam Ṣādiq, Muḥammad Ibn Mas'ūd Ibn 'Ayyāsh's exegesis of the Qur'an, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr* by Yūnus Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, 'Abdullāh Ibn Ḥammād al-Anṣārī's book, and finally Ibrāhīm Khazzāz's book and others, the names of which I cannot remember.[93]

These are all the hadiths we cite by way of exegesis of the noble verse. We have cited many.

It is clear from all this that Ali was unique in his time in the sublimest human attributes; he is like the most precious pearl in the world and a gem shining among all creatures, the teacher of mankind, the example of proper instruction, the source of benevolence, the mine of blessings, and the pride of men, angels, and prophets.

The Khiḍr's Words about Ali's Martyrdom

How well the Prophet Khiḍr praised him for these attributes, and wept over his loss.

Ṣafwānī, in *al-Iḥan wa al-Miḥan*, and Kulaynī in *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* narrate:

لما استشهد امير المؤمنين جاء شيخ يبكي وهو يقول: اليوم انقطعت علاقة النبوة، حتى وقف بباب البيت الذي فيه أمير المؤمنين وأخذ بعضادتي الباب فقال: رحمك الله فلقد كنت أول الناس إسلاماً، وأخلصهم ايماناً، وأشدهم يقيناً، وأخوفهم من الله، وأطوعهم لنبي الله، وأفضلهم مناقب، وأكثرهم سوابق، وأشبههم به خلقاً وخلقاً وسيماء وفضلاً. وكنت أخفضهم صوتاً، وأعلاهم طوداً، وأقلهم كلاماً، وأصوبهم منطقاً، وأشجعهم قلباً، وأحسنهم عملاً، وأقواهم يقيناً. حفظت ما

ضَيَّعُوا وَرَعَيْتَ مَا أَمْهَلُوا، وَشَمَّرْتَ إِذَا اجْتَمَعُوا، وَعَلَوْتَ إِذْ هَلَعُوا، وَوَقَصْتَ إِذْ شَرَعُوا، وَأَدْرَكْتَ أَوْتَارَ مَا طَلَبُوا. كُنْتَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَذَاباً وَاصِباً، وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كَهْفاً وَحِصْناً، كُنْتَ كَالْجَبَلِ الرَّاسِخِ لَا تُحَرِّكُهُ الْعَوَاصِفُ. كُنْتَ لِلطِّفْلِ كَالْأَبِ الشَّفِيقِ وَلِلْأَرَامِلِ كَالْبَعْلِ الْمَطُوفِ. قَسَمْتَ بِالسَّوِيَّةِ، وَعَدَلْتَ فِي الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَأَطْفَأْتَ النِّيرَانَ وَكَسَرْتَ الْأَصْنَامَ، وَأَذْلَلْتَ الْأَوْثَانَ، وَعَبَدْتَ الرَّحْمَنَ فِي كَلَامٍ لَهُ كَثِيرٍ. فَالْتَفَتُوا فَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَحَداً. فَسُئِلَ الْحَسَنُ عليه السلام مَنْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ؟ قَالَ: الْخَضِرُ عليه السلام.[94]

When Ali was martyred, an old man came, weeping and saying: "Today, the link to prophethood is broken!" He stood at the door of the room where the Commander of the Faithful was, took hold of the doorposts, and said:

> May God have mercy upon you! You were indeed the first person to become a Muslim, the sincerest in belief, most certain of them, most God-fearing of them, most obedient of them to God's Prophet, had better feats than any of them, set more precedents than any of them, resembled him more physically and in terms of ethics, characteristics, and virtue than any of them.
>
> You were the most soft-spoken of them, the highest mountain among them, first of them to speak, most well-spoken of them, bravest-hearted of them, acted best of them, had stronger certainty than they, kept what they wasted, took care of what they overlooked, knuckled down when they came together, transcended when they were greedy, and stopped when they innovated, and you got to the heart of their wrongdoing.
>
> You were lasting punishment of the unbelievers and a cave and fortress for the believers.
>
> You were like a firm mountain unmoved by storms!
>
> You were like a compassionate father to the children and like a kind husband to the widows.
>
> You shared out equally and were fair to the flock. You extinguished the fires, smashed the idols, humiliated those idolized, served the Merciful...

They then turned round but could not see anyone, so Hasan was asked who the man was. He replied: "The Khiḍr."

ᶜAllāmah Majlisī narrates this hadith in full, albeit worded slightly differently, in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, from *Kamāl al-Din wa Tamām al-Niᶜmah* by Ṣadūq.[95]

Muḥaddith Qummī says: "This hadith is narrated via authentic chains of transmission on the authority of Kulaynī, Ṣadūq, and others. I cite it in *al-Hadiyyah*, in the chapter on visiting the Imam—because the Khiḍr's words amount to an appropriate salutation when visiting (*ziyārah*) the Master of the Faithful.[96]

My comment: The Khiḍr's words truly do sum up the Master of the Faithful's spiritual status and deserve an entire book of detailed commentary dedicated to them.

Imam Ali's Virtues Are Innumerable

How well a Persian poet said:

کتاب فضل تو را آب بحر کافی

نیست که تر کنم سر انگشت و صفحه بشمارم

[O Ali,] the sea-water is not enough to wet my finger-tips
To count the pages of the book of your virtues!

It is narrated from Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Khārazmī via his chain of transmission from Muḥammad Ibn Manṣūr:

> I heard Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal say: "No other companion is narrated to have had as many virtues as Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib." Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal also says: "A man said to Ibn ᶜAbbās: 'Glory be to God! How many virtues and feats Ali has; I reckon them to be more than 3000 feats!' Ibn ᶜAbbās replied: 'Do you not think they are closer to 30,000?'"[97]

Also via his chain of transmission, Khārazmī narrates from Ḥarb Ibn ᶜAbd al-Ḥamīd that Sulaymān al-Aᶜmash told us that Mansūr Dawānīqī said during his reign:

> "Sulaymān, tell me how many hadiths you narrate about Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's virtues."
>
> I said: "Just a few."
>
> He said: "Woe betide you! I asked you, how many?"
>
> I answered: "Ten thousand or one thousand."

When I said, "one thousand," he thought that was too few and said, "Woe betide you, Sulaymān. More like ten thousand, like you said the first time."[98]

Also via his chain of transmission from Mujāhid, Khārazmī narrates from Ibn ᶜAbbās:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَوْ أَنَّ الأَشْجَارَ أَقْلَامٌ وَالْبَحْرَ مِدَادٌ وَالْجِنَّ حُسَّابٌ وَالإِنْسَ كُتَّابٌ مَا أَحْصَوا فَضَائِلَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِب.[99]

"God's Messenger said: 'If all the trees were pens, the sea were ink, all the *jinn* were accountants, and all the people were scribes, they could not count all of Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's virtues.'"

It is also narrated via his chain of transmission on the authority of Muhammad Ibn ᶜImārah from his father from Jaᶜfar Ibn Muhammad al-Ṣādiq, from his forefathers, from Ali, from God's Messenger:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِرَهْطٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ: إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى جَعَلَ لأَخِي عَلِيٍّ فَضَائِلَ لاَ تُحْصَى كَثْرَةً، فَمَنْ ذَكَرَ فَضِيلَةً مِنْ فَضَائِلِهِ مُقِرّاً بِهَا غَفَرَ اللهُ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ.

God's Messenger said to some of his companions:

> God, the Exalted, gave my brother, Ali, virtues too numerous to mention; God will wipe out all the long-past and recent sins of whoever cites just one of his virtues, and swears to it:
>
> وَمَنْ كَتَبَ فَضِيلَةً مِنْ فَضَائِلِهِ لَمْ تَزَلِ الْمَلاَئِكَةُ تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَا بَقِيَ لِذَلِكَ الْكِتَابِ رَسْمٌ، وَمَنِ اسْتَمَعَ إِلَى فَضِيلَةٍ مِنْ فَضَائِلِهِ غَفَرَ اللهُ لَهُ الذُّنُوبَ الَّتِي اكْتَسَبَهَا بِالنَّظَرِ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: النَّظَرُ إِلَى عَلِيٍّ عِبَادَةٌ، وَذِكْرُهُ عِبَادَةٌ، لاَ يَقْبَلُ اللهُ إِيمَانَ عَبْدٍ إِلاَّ بِوَلاَيَتِهِ وَالْبَرَاءَةِ مِنْ أَعْدَائِهِ.[100]
>
> And the angels will always seek forgiveness for whoever writes a virtue out of the virtues of Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, so long as any trace of that writing remains. And God will forgive all the sins committed through looking by whoever listens to one of Ali's virtues.

He then said: "Looking at Ali is worship, and remembering him is worship. God does not accept the belief of any servant without love for Ali and hatred of his enemies."

Khārazmī also narrates in *al-Manāqib* from Simāk Ibn Ḥarb on the authority of Saᶜīd Ibn Jubayr:

قُلْتُ لابنِ عَبّاسٍ ـ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنهُما ـ اسألكَ عَنِ اختِلافِ النّاسِ فِي عَلِيٍّ ـ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنهُ ـ قالَ: يا ابنَ جُبَيْرٍ تَسألُنِي عَن رَجُلٍ كانَتْ لَهُ ثَلاثَةُ آلافِ مَنقَبَةٍ فِي لَيلَةٍ واحِدَةٍ وَهِيَ لَيلَةُ القُرّةِ فِي قَلِيبِ بَدْرٍ، سَلَّمَ عَلَيهِ ثَلاثَةُ آلافٍ مِنَ المَلائِكَةِ مِن عِندِ رَبِّهِم، وَتَسألُنِي عَن وَصِيِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَآلِهِ وَصاحِبِ حَوضِهِ وَصاحِبِ لِوائِهِ فِي المَحشَرِ. وَالَّذِي نَفسُ عَبدِ اللهِ بنِ العَبّاسِ بِيَدِهِ لَو كانَتْ بِحارُ الدُّنيا مِداداً، وَأشجارُها أقلاماً، وَأهلُها كُتّاباً فَكَتَبوا مَناقِبَ عَلِيِّ بنِ أبِي طالِبٍ وَفَضائِلَهُ مَا أحصَوها.[101]

I asked Ibn ᶜAbbās about people's disagreement over Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and he replied:

> Ibn Jubayr, you are asking me about a man who achieved 3000 feats in a single night, the night of the water-skin at the well at Badr. Three thousand angels attendant to their Lord greeted him. You are asking me about God's Messenger's executor put in charge of his pool, his standard-bearer at the Resurrection! By Him, in Whose Hand is ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAbbās' soul, if all the world's seas were ink, its trees pens, and its inhabitants scribes to write, they would not be able to count all Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's virtues.

Khārazmī also relates in *al-Manāqib* that Abū Ṭufayl says:

قالَ بَعضُ الصَّحابَةِ: لَقَدْ كانَ لِعَلِيٍّ مِنَ السَّوابِقِ مَا لَو قُسِّمَت سابِقَةٌ مِنها بَينَ الناسِ لَوَسِعَتْهُم خَيراً[102]

"One of the companions said: 'Ali set such precedents that if one of them were shared among all the people of the world, it would suffice them adequately.'"

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

> One of the miracles, after Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's death, is a number of people being compelled to narrate his virtues even though it was evidence against them. Even if one of them denied it, his colleague would object. This is in history books, authentic hadith collections (*ṣiḥāḥ*), hadith compilations (*sunan*), hadith encyclopedias (*jawāmiᶜ*), biographies [of the Prophet] (*siyar*), and works of exegesis that [scholars] unanimously agree are authentic. Even if it is not in one of them, it will be in another one.

An example of these testimonies is whatever is unanimously agreed upon, or when so many narrate his achievements that the account has become *a priori* knowledge, such as Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī's writing

al-Ghadīr, Ibn Shāhīn's *al-Manāqib* and *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah* (*Fāṭimah's Virtues*), Yaʿqūb Ibn Shaybah's *Tafḍīl al-Hasan wa al-Husayn* (*The Superiority of Hasan and Husayn*) and *Musnad Amīr al-Mu'minīn wa Akhbāruhu wa Faḍā'iluhu*, Jāḥiẓ's *al-ʿAlawī* and *Faḍl Banī Hāshim alā Banī Umayyah* (*The Superiority of the Hāshimites to the Umayyads*), Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī's *Manqabat al-Muṭahharīn fī Faḍā'il Amīr al-Mu'minīn* and *Mā Nazal fī al-Qur'ān fī Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, Abū al-Maḥāsin al-Ru'yānī's *al-Jaʿfariyyāt*, Muwaffaq al-Makkī's *Qaḍāyā Amīr al-Mu'minīn* and *Radd al-Shams li Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, Abū Bakr Muhammad Ibn Mu'min Shirāzī's *Nuzūl al-Qur'ān fī Sha'n Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, Abū Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd al-Mālik al-Mu'adhdhin's *al-Arbaʿīn fī Faḍā'il al-Zahrā'*, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad Ahl al-Bayt wa Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, Abū ʿAbdillāh Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad al-Naṭanzī's *al-Khaṣā'iṣ al-ʿAlawiyyah ʿalā Sā'ir al-Bariyyah*, Ibn al-Maghāzilī's *al-Manāqib*, Abū al-Qasim al-Busṭī's *al-Marātib*, Abū ʿAbdillāh Baṣrī's *al-Darajāt*, and Khaṭīb Abū Turāb's *al-Ḥadā'iq*.

In spite of his enemies' concealment and tendencies, they broke with habit, testifying to his virtues, and those who rejected him confessed to his feats.[103]

The poet says:

شَهِدَ الانامُ بِفَضْلِهِ حَتّٰى الْعِدى وَالْفَضْلُ مَا شَهِدَتْ بِهِ الاعداء [104]

People, unanimously, testify to his virtues,
even his enemies; true virtue is what even enemies testify to.

Another poet says:

يَرْوِى مَنَاقِبَهُم لَنَا أَعْداؤُهُم لا فَضْلَ إِلّا مَا رَواهُ حَسُودُ [105]

Their enemies relate their feats to us
There is no virtue except what a thoroughly jealous person relates.

Obviously the people referred to by Ibn Shahr Āshūb were all alive before his time, and he died in 588 AH, but there are other books written both before and after his time.

Sayyid Muhammad Mahdī, the son of Sayyid Hasan Khirsān, cites them in the introduction to the seventh edition of *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*. There are as many as 183.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "Another miracle is how many narrations there are about his feats and virtues, in spite of what they buried and the threats they made against those who narrated them."

Muslim, Bukhārī, Ibn Baṭṭah and Naṭanzī quote what ᶜĀ'ishah said about the Prophet:

قَالَتْ فِي جُمْلَةِ ذٰلِكَ: فَخَرَجَ النَّبِيُّ بَيْنَ رَجُلَيْنِ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ الْفَضْلِ وَرَجُلٍ آخَرَ يَخُطُّ قَدَمَاهُ، عَاصِبًا رَأْسَهُ.

"Some of what she said was: 'The Prophet then set off, his head wrapped up [and] his feet dragging, between two men from his household, al-Faḍl and another man.'"

She means Ali, but either she does not mention his name out of jealousy or the narrators have suppressed it.

Muᶜāwiyah Prohibits the Citation of the Imam's Feats

وَقَالَ مُعَاوِيَةُ لِابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ: إِنَّا كَتَبْنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ تَنْهَى عَنْ ذِكْرِ مَنَاقِبِ عَلِيٍّ فَكُفَّ لِسَانَكَ. قَالَ: أَكَتَبْتَنَا عَنْ قِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ؟ قَالَ: لَا. قَالَ: أَكَتَبْتَنَا عَنْ تَأْوِيلِهِ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: أَفَنَقْرَأُهُ وَلَا نَسْأَلُ؟ قَالَ: سَلْ عَنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِكَ. قَالَ: إِنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ عَلَيْنَا فَنَسْأَلُ غَيْرَنَا؟ أَتَنْهَانَا أَنْ نَعْبُدَ اللهَ؟ فَإِذًا نَهْلِكُ الْأُمَّةُ. قَالَ: اقْرَأُوا وَلَا تَرْوُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللهُ فِيكُمْ. «يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ». ثُمَّ نَادَى مُعَاوِيَةُ: أَنْ بَرِئَتْ الذِّمَّةُ مِمَّنْ رَوَى حَدِيثًا مِنْ مَنَاقِبِ عَلِيٍّ، حَتَّى قَالَ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ الشَّدَّادِ اللَّيْثُ: وَدِدْتُ أَنِّي أَتْرُكُ أَنْ أُحَدِّثَ بِفَضَائِلِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ يَوْمًا إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ عُنُقِي ضُرِبَتْ.[106]

Muᶜāwiyah said to Ibn ᶜAbbās: "We have written to all horizons, forbidding the citation of Ali's feats, so stay your tongue."

Ibn ᶜAbbās asked: "So are you prohibiting us from reciting the Qur'an?"

He replied: "No."

[Ibn ᶜAbbās] asked: "Are you prohibiting us from interpreting it?"

He replied: "Yes."

[Ibn ᶜAbbās] asked: "Shall we recite it and not ask [questions]?"

He said: "Ask [anyone] apart from your Household."

Ibn ᶜAbbās said: "It was revealed to us, but we should ask others?! Do you forbid us from worshiping God? The nation is doomed, then."

[Muᶜāwiyah] said: "Recite the Qur'an, but do not narrate what God has revealed about you."

They want to extinguish God's Light with their mouths! (9:32; 61:8)

Muʿāwiyah then said at the top of his voice: "Even anyone who narrates a hadith about Ali's virtues is cleared."

ʿAbdullāh Ibn Shaddād Laythī says: "I wish I could be left alone to speak day until night about Ali's virtue, even if I am beheaded."

A traditionist would narrate a jurisprudential hadith or hadith about [the Commander of the Faithful's] battlefield duels and say:

قَالَ رَجُلٌ مِن قُرَيش.

"A man from Quraysh said." Instead of mentioning Ali, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Abī Laylā would say: "One of God's Messenger's companions." Hasan al-Baṣrī would say: "Zaynab's father."[107]

When Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr was asked: "Who will be the standard-bearer on the Day of Judgment?" he replied: "Have you gone mad?" He meant: "Do you want me to mention Ali and get us both killed?"

Shaʿbī says: "I used to hear that the Umayyad preachers vilify Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib when preaching in the mosques—as if lifted by their arms to Heaven—and I would hear them praise their ancestors, as if disinterring putrefaction."

A Bedouin woman was seen saying in the Kūfa Mosque:

يَا مَشْهُوراً فِي السَّماواتِ وَيا مَشْهُوراً فِي الاَرَضِيْنَ، يا مَشْهُوراً فِي الآخِرَة، جَهَدَتِ الجَبابِرَة وَالمُلُوكُ عَلى إطفاء نُورِكَ وَإخمادِ ذِكْرِكَ، فَأبَى اللهُ لِذِكْرِكَ الاَعْلُواَ وَلِنُورِكَ إلاّ ضِياءً وَنَماءً وَلَوْ كَرِهَ المُشْرِكُونَ.

"Well-known in the heavens, well-known on earth, well-known in the hereafter, tyrants and kings struggled to extinguish your light and suppress mention of you, but God refused to let your light do anything but shine and grow—even if the polytheists hate [it].

They asked her: "Whom are you describing?"

She replied: "That is the Commander of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib." [The person who asked the question] turned round but did not see anyone.

Ibn Nubātah says: "Quraysh's trickery spread, adding a twist to the Resurrection's cry. An example of that is the shrines to his offspring around the earth and the spread of dreams about his feats. Bed-

ridden patients are cured and afflicted people are delivered. This is unheard of for any other."[108]

Uzrī's Ode

Shaykh Uzrī says in an ode elegizing the Noblest Messenger:

مَا تَنَاهَتْ عَوَالِمُ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا وَإِلَى ذَاتِ أَحْمَدٍ مُنْتَهَاهَا،
أَيُّ خَلْقٍ لِلّٰهِ أَعْظَمُ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ الْغَايَةُ الَّتِي اسْتَقْصَاهَا،
قَلَّبَ الْحَاضِرِينَ ظَهْرَ الْبَطْنِ فَرَأَى ذَاتَ أَحْمَدٍ فَاجْتَبَاهَا.

1. No realms of knowledge are attributable to anyone but Ahmad's essence.
2. Which of God's creatures is greater than he, his being the purpose that He intended?
3. He turned the universe upside down, saw Ahmad's essence, and selected it.

Then, the poet turns to the Household and says about their purity and greatness:

سَادَةٌ لَا تُرِيدُ إِلَّا رِضَى اللّٰهِ كَمَا لَا يُرِيدُ إِلَّا رِضَاهَا
خَصَّهَا مِنْ كَمَالِهِ بِالْمَعَانِي وَبِأَعْلَى أَسْمَائِهِ سَمَّاهَا
لَمْ يَكُونُوا لِلْعَرْشِ إِلَّا كُنُوزاً خَافِيَاتٍ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ أَبْدَاهَا
كَمْ لَهُمْ أَلْسُنٌ عَنِ اللّٰهِ تُنْبِي هِيَ أَقْلَامُ حِكْمَةٍ قَدْ بَرَاهَا
وَهُمُ الْأَعْيُنُ الصَّحِيحَاتُ تَهْدِي كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَكْفُوفَةٍ عَمْيَاهَا
عُلَمَاءُ أَئِمَّةٌ حُكَمَاءُ يَهْتَدِي النَّجْمُ بِاتِّبَاعِ هُدَاهَا
وَرِثُوا مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ سَنَنَ أَوْلَاهَا وَحَازُوا مَا لَمْ تَحُزْ أُخْرَاهَا

4. Masters who want nothing but God's pleasure—just as He wants nothing but their pleasure.
5. He conferred some of His Perfection on them through meanings, and named them with His finest Names.
6. They were nothing but hidden treasures for His Throne; Glory be to Him Who manifested them.
7. They are the tongues who tell of God; they are pens of wisdom that He has sharpened.
8. They are healthy eyes. Everyone else's eyes are blind.
9. Scholars, Imams, and Sages. The star is directed by following their guidance.

10. They inherited from Muhammad the foremostness of the first and have what the last do not have.

Referring back to God's Messenger, he says:

آيَةُ اللهِ حِكْمَةُ اللهِ سَيْفُ اللهِ وَالرَّحْمَةُ الَّتِي أَهداها،
فَاضَ لِلْخَلْقِ مِنْهُ عِلْمٌ وَحِلْمٌ أَخَذَتْ عَنْهُمَا الْعُقُولُ نُهاها،
لَمْ يَكُنْ أَكْرَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ حَتَّى عَلِمَ اللهُ أَنَّه أَزكاها،
إِنَّمَا الْكَائِنَاتُ نُقْطَةُ خَطٍّ بِيَدَيْهِ نَعِيمُها وَشَقاها،
كُلُّ مَادُونَ عَالَمِ اللَّوحِ طَوعٌ لِيَدَى فَضْلِهِ الَّذِى لَا يُضاها،
حَازَ مِن جَوْهَرِ التَّقَدُّسِ نَفساً تَاهَتِ الْأَنبياء فِى مَعْناها،
لَا تُجِلْ فِى صِفاتِ أَحْمَدَ فِكْراً فَهِيَ الصُّورَةُ الَّتِى لَن تَراها
تِلْكَ نَفْسٌ عَزَّتْ عَلَى اللهِ قَدْراً فَارْتَضَاهَا لِنَفْسِهِ وَاصْطَفَاها
مَا تَنَاهَتْ عَوَالِمُ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا وَإِلَى كُنْهِ أَحْمَدٍ مُنْتَهَاها
حَازَ قُدْسِيَّةَ الْعُلُومِ وَإِنْ لَمْ يُؤْتَهَا أَحْمَدٌ فَمَنْ يُؤْتَاها،
وَهُوَ الْآيَةُ الْمُحِيطَةُ فِى الْكَوْنِ فَفِى عَيْنِ كُلِّ شَىءٍ تَراها.

1. God's sign, God's wisdom, God's sword, and the mercy that He has gifted.
2. Knowledge and patience flooded from him to the creatures; minds took their understanding from him.
3. Muhammad was not the noblest of prophets until God knew he was the purest.
4. All beings, comfortable and wretched, are just a dot on a line in his hands.
5. Everything lower than the Tablet submits to the hands of his unique merit.
6. He acquired from the Essence of the Holiness a soul over the meaning of which the prophets are bewildered.
7. So do not turn any thought to Ahmad's attributes, because they are the image that you will never see.
8. That is a soul whose the value is dear to God. So He chose it for Himself and selected it.
9. No realms of knowledge are attributable to anyone but Ahmad's essence.

10. He has attained the kernel of the kernels—had Ahmad not been given it, who would have?
11. He is the comprehensive sign in the entire universe, so you see him in everything.

After detailed assessment of God's Messenger's status, he turns to Ali's and says:

مَلِكٌ شُدَّ أَزْرُهُ بِأَخِيهِ فَاسْتَقَامَتْ مِنَ الأُمُورِ قَنَاهَا
أَسَدُ اللهِ مَا رَأَتْ مُقْلَتَاهُ نَارَ حَرْبٍ تَشُبُّ إِلَّا اصْطَلَاهَا

1. He was a Sovereign strengthened [by God] through his brother, so the most crooked of matters was straightened out;
2. God's Lion whose eyes saw no fire of battle by which he did not warm himself.

He proceeds to explain his virtues and feats at Badr, Uḥūd, al-Aḥzāb (the Confederates), Ḥunayn, and Khaybar, as well as his other virtues such as the purification and prayer duel verses and Sūrat Halatā (76) being revealed about him, all doors to the mosque being blocked except his and the Prophet's, the Status and Ghadīr hadiths, and innumerable others, eventually saying:

أَيُّهَا الرَّاكِبُ الْمُجِدُّ رُوَيْداً بِقُلُوبٍ تَقَلَّبَتْ فِي جَوَاهَا
إِنْ تَرَاءَتْ أَرْضُ الْغَرِيَّيْنِ فَاخْلَعْ وَاخْلَعِ النَّعْلَ دُونَ وَادِي طُوَاهَا
وَإِذَا شِمْتَ قُبَّةَ الْعَالَمِ الأَعْلَى وَأَنْوَارَ رَبِّهَا تَغْشَاهَا
فَتَوَاضَعْ فَثَمَّ دَارَةُ قُدْسٍ تَتَمَنَّى الأَفْلَاكُ لَثْمَ ثَرَاهَا
قُلْ لَهُ وَالدُّمُوعُ سَفْحٌ عَقِيقٌ وَالْجَوَى تَصْطَلِي بِنَارٍ غَضَاهَا
يَا ابْنَ عَمِّ الْمُصْطَفَى أَنْتَ يَدُ اللهِ الَّتِي عَمَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ نَدَاهَا
أَنْتَ قُرْآنُهُ الْقَدِيمُ وَأَوْصَا فُكَ آيَاتُهُ الَّتِي أَوْحَاهَا
حَسْبُكَ اللهُ فِي مَآثِرَ شَتَّى هِيَ مِثْلُ الأَعْدَادِ لَا تَتَنَاهَى
أَنْتَ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ خَيْرُ الْبَرَايَا وَالسَّمَا خَيْرُ مَا بِهَا قَمَرَاهَا
لَكَ ذَاتٌ كَذَاتِهِ حَيْثُ لَوْلَا أَنَّهَا مِثْلُهَا لَمَا آخَاهَا
قَدْ تَرَاضَعْتُمَا بِثَدْيِ وِصَالٍ كَانَ مِنْ جَوْهَرِ التَّجَلِّي غِذَاهَا
يَا عَلِيُّ الْمِقْدَارُ حَسْبُكَ لَاهُو تِيَّةٌ لَا يُحَاطُ فِي عُلْيَاهَا

لَكَ نَفْسٌ مِن جَوهَرِ اللُطف صيغَتْ جَعَلَ اللهُ كُلَّ نَفسٍ فِداها
كُلُّ ما فِي القَضاءِ مِن كائناتٍ أنتَ مَولى بَقائِها وَفَناها
يا أخا المُصطَفى لَدَيَّ ذُنوبٌ هِيَ عَينُ القَذى وَأنتَ جَلاها
يا غِياثَ الصَّريخِ دَعوَةَ عافٍ لَيسَ إلّاكَ سامِعٌ نَجواها
كَيفَ تَخشَى العَصاةُ بَلوى المَعا صِي وَلِيُّ اللهُ مُنقِذٌ مُبتَلاها
لَكَ فِي مُرتَقَى العُلى وَالمَعالي دَرَجاتٌ لا يُرتَقى أدناها[109]

1. O camel-driver, easy with hearts tossed by their ardent love;
2. When the Land of the Ghariyyayn (Najaf) comes into sight, take off your sandals instead of [in] Ṭuwā Valley.
3. When you smell the dome of the highest world and the lights of its Lord envelops it
4. Humble yourself, because that is a Holy House, the soil of which the heavenly bodies wish they could kiss.
5. While your tears are running down like the fresh pearls, and when your love warms itself by the fire of its land, tell him:
6. O Cousin of the Chosen One, you are God's Hand, the call of which is to everything.
7. You are His ancient Qur'an and your attributes are its verses that He revealed.
8. God suffices you in various feats—like numbers, they are infinite.
9. After the Prophet, you are the best of all creatures as the best in the sky are the sun and the moon.
10. You have an essence like his. Were it not like his, he would not have made you his brother.
11. You two suckled the breast of a union, the nourishment of which was of the Essence of manifestation.
12. O Ali, the measure by you is heavenly, the sublimity of which is incomprehensible!
13. You have a soul fashioned from the essence of Grace—may God make every soul its sacrifice!
14. You are the master over the survival or extinction of all ordained beings.
15. O Muṣṭafā's brother! I have sins that are a pain in the eye. You will clear them.
16. Succor of the afflicted, the answer to the prayer of those with nothing. There is no one but you to hear their whisper.
17. How can sinners fear the affliction of sins when God has made you savior of those afflicted with them!
18. You have levels of sublimity and perfection, the lowest of which cannot be reached!

The poet then addresses the Saqīfah, the seizure of the Caliphate, and condemns both shaykhs. He also speaks of Zahrā's status, the Prophet's testamentary instructions to her, and the persecution she suffered at the hands of [the two shaykhs]:

فجزاه الله عن الرّسول وعن أهل بيته خير الجزاء.

"May God reward [Shaykh Uzrī] greatly on behalf of the Prophet and his family!"

In fact, his ode, along with an explanation of everything referred to therein, deserves to be translated into Persian, compiled into a book, and distributed to the public.

Persian Poetry

How beautifully the Persian poet says:

حقّ را چو به خلق شد جلوه‌گری پوشید علی را به لباس بشری
از عالَم لامکان به امکان آورد تا بی‌خبران را دهد از خود خبری

When the Real manifested in man's form
He first dressed up Ali with the clothes of man,
He was brought from non-existence to human being,
To give unheeding mankind glad tidings.

How beautifully another poet says:

سِرّ ولایت آموز مصباح جان برافروز رو از علی بیاموز یک شیمه علیّه
روی علیّ اعلی اشراق نورِ بالا عَنْ وَجْهِهِ تلالا نورٌ مِنَ العُلیّه
سِرّ هویّت آمد روح مشیّت آمد ایجاد کلّ شیء مِن مَبدأ المَشیّه
چون روح جمله اسماست این نکته پای برخاست یا واهِبَ العَطایا یا رازقَ البَریّه
چون نیست رَه بذاتش یک شمّه از صفاتش الرِّفقُ بِالرَّعیّه وَالعَدلُ فِی القَضیّه

Learn the secret of loving the Imam, and light the lamp of your soul. Go to Ali and learn good manners. Ali's light is the highest, receiving its light even from the Highest. The Original Light illuminates his already bright features.

The Secret of the Identity appeared, and the Spirit of the Divine Will became incarnate in him, and the creation of everything comes from the

source of the Will, because Ali is the spirit of all Divine Names, a matter that is indisputable. O Bestower of all gifts and Provider for mankind!

[Another couplet says:] "Because we have no way to reach His Essence, we have a scent of His attributes—kindness to the flock and fairness in arbitration!"

What a lovely poem Mullah Rūmī (Mawlawī) has composed:

روی نشد از سر علی کس آگاه زیرا که نشد کس آگه از سرّ الله

یك ممکن و این همه صفات واجب لاحول ولا قوة الّا بالله

O Rūmī, no one has become aware of Ali's secret
Because not one of the people knows God's secret,
Is it possible for them to have the attributes of the Necessary Being?
No one has power or strength except through God.[110]

ʿAbd al-Bāqī Effendī

ʿAbd al-Bāqī Effendī says:

یا ایّها الاوصیاء أنتَ لِطه صِهْرُهُ وَابْنُ عَمِّهِ وَأَخُوه

إنَّ لِلّهِ فی مَعالیكَ سِرّاً أكثَرُ العالَمینَ ما عَلِمُوه

أنتَ ثانِی الاباء فی مُنتَهَی النّورِ وَآباؤُهُ تُعَدُّ بَنُوه

خَلَقَ اللهُ آدَمَ مِن تُرابٍ فَهُوَ ابنٌ لَهُ وَأنتَ أبُوهُ

1. O Father of the Executors, you are Ṭā Hā's son-in-law, cousin and brother.
2. God has a secret in your noble traits, which most worlds do not know.
3. At the end of the course, you are the second father, and his forefathers are considered to be his offspring.
4. God created Adam from clay (*turāb*), so he is the son of clay; but you are the father of [clay].[111]

Arabic Poetry by Sayyid Ismāʿīl Shīrāzī

Ayatollah Ḥājj Sayyid Ismāʿīl Shīrāzī, the cousin of Sayyid al-Ṭāʾifah (Chief of the Sect) Ḥājj Mīrzā Muhammad Shīrāzī, may God elevate his position, has composed an excellent poem on the anniversary of Ali's birth, praising him. We cite part of it below:

إنْ یَکُنْ یُجْعَلُ لِلّهِ البَنُون وَتَعالَی اللهُ عَمّا یَصِفُونَ

فَوَلِيدُ الْبَيْتِ اَحْرَى أَنْ يَكُون لِوَلِيِّ الْبَيْتِ حَقّاً وَلَداً
هُوَ بَعْدَ الْمُصْطَفى خَيْرُ الْوَرى مِن ذُرَى الْعَرْشِ إلى تَحْتَ الثَّرى
قَدْ كَسَتْ عَلْيَاؤُهُ أُمَّ الْقُرى عِزَّةً تَحْمى حِماها ابَدا
لا عُزَيْرٌ، لا، ولا ابنُ مَرْيَمَ حَيْثُ لا يَدْنُوهُ مَن لَمْ يَحْرِم
سَبَقَ الْكَوْنَ جَمِيعاً فِي الْوُجود وَطَوى عالَمَ غَيْبٍ وَشُهُود
كُلُّ مَا فِي الْكَوْنِ مِن يُمْنَاهُ جُود إذ هُوَ الْكَائِنُ لِلّهِ يَدا
سَيِّدٌ حَازَتْ بِهِ الْفَضْلَ مُضَر بِفَخَارٍ قَدْ سَمَا كُلَّ الْبَشَر
وَجْهُهُ فِي الْفَلَكِ الْعُلْيا قَمَر فَبِهِ لا بِالنُّجُومِ يُهْتَدى
وَيَدُ اللهِ مُدِرُّ الانْعُمِ نَحْوَ مَعْنَاهُ لِنَيْلِ الْمَغْنَمِ

1. If God had sons attributed to Him—and far be God from what they describe
2. The child born in the House, the Master of the House, is truly worthiest of being a son!
3. After the Chosen One, he is the best of mankind, from the highest point of the Throne to beneath the earth.
4. His sublimity covers the Mother of all Towns, his strength forever protecting it.
5. ʿUzayr? No, nor the son of Mary, for no one who has not entered pilgrim sanctity can approach him.
6. He existed before the entire universe, and harbored the secret and manifest worlds.
7. Everything in existence is charity from his right hand, for he is the being who is a hand to God.
8. A chief through whom Muḍar acquired merit, the pride who surpassed the whole of mankind.
9. His face is a moon in the highest firmament, so he is followed, not the stars,
10. God's hand, showering blessings towards its intended recipient to attain benefit.[112]

More Persian Poetry, by Mirza Jilvah

And how superbly the theosopher Mirza Jilvah says in Persian:

غیر علی کسی نکرد خدمت احمد غمخور موسی نباشد الا هارون
صورت انسانی و صفات خدائی سبحان الله از این مرکب و معجون

کرد جهاني زتيغ زنده به معني ازدم تيغش اگرچه ريخت همي خون
ساخت جاهش به عقل پي نتوان برد نتوان باموزه درگذشت ز جيحون
سوي شريعت گراي و مهر علي جوي ازين دندان اگر نه قلبي و وارون

No one but Ali served Ahmad,
Just like no one but Aaron shared Moses' grief.
Ali is in human form but with divine attributes,
Glory be to God! What a fine blend and paste!
Ali actually brought the world to life with his sword
Even though his sword is still dripping with blood
Ali's status is inconceivable,
Because one cannot cross the Oxus in small shoes!
Head for the water source, mankind, and let love for Ali fill your heart
That should be from the bottom of your heart
If you are traveling the straight path avoiding crookedness.

Lessons Fifty-Two and Fifty-Three

Commentary on the Verse

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

Those who disbelieve, say, "You are not a messenger." Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between you and me."

LESSONS FIFTY-TWO AND FIFTY-THREE

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

Blessing upon Muhammad and his infallible Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

Those who disbelieve, say, "You are not a messenger." Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between you and me." (13:43)

Commentary on the Verse *Those who disbelieve, say, "You are not a messenger."*

The consensus of all Shi'a scholars is that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means Ali. The Prophet was given the task by God to tell whoever rejects the Qur'an and his Prophethood: "The best witness between you and me to confirm my claim and the truthfulness of the Qur'an is the Holy Essence of the Creator, and Ali, who knows all the Qur'an, is acquainted with its truths and secrets and is aware of every minute, fine, manifest, and hidden thing in the Qur'an."

All the hadiths related by the Household, without the slightest contradiction, unanimously agree that the verse was revealed about him.

A large number of Sunni scholars believe that it means Ali, but some of them say *Whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means God the Glorious Himself, Gabriel, Jewish or Christian scholars who know the Gospels and Torah, or 'Abdullāh Ibn Salām in particular, who had become a Muslim.'

Opinions on Who It Is Who Has All the Knowledge of the Book

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī says: "Some commentators say, 'It means 'Abdullāh Ibn Salām, but most early and later exegetes, narrators, traditionists, and researchers into chains of transmission—both friend and foe—believe that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."[113]

Zamakhsharī says: "It means him who has all the knowledge of the Qur'an, composed as it is with inimitable coherence beyond human ability." He then explains all the other possible explanations preceded by the words "It is said" (*wa qīla*).[114]

A Brief Overview of Sūrat al-Ra'd

It is best for us, before referring to the hadiths narrated by both Sunnis and Shi'a concerning this verse, and also before explaining consensuses and opinions on this verse, to have a brief look at this blessed verse from Sūrat al-Ra'd (The Thunder) (13:43) to determine its context. Some of the possible explanations and opinions will be refuted automatically in the process.

This chapter was revealed to affirm the truthfulness of the Divine Book, the Qur'an, even though the unbelievers did not accept the Qur'an as a miracle, and kept asking God's Messenger for another clear and obvious miracle to be sent down for them from the heavens. The verses of this chapter, from the very beginning to the end, are related to each other; they are like pearls arranged beautifully on a thread. Its beginning is linked to its end and its end to its beginning.

The verse we are interested in is at the end of the chapter, and it is a good answer to all unbelievers. It is such that if this verse were taken away, the whole chapter would be deformed and look like a broken bowl—it would lose its magnitude and dignity.

The chapter begins with this verse:

الٓمٓرٰ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Alif, Lām, Mīm, Rā. These are the Signs of the Book; and what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, even though most people do not believe. (13:1)

Then, it moves on to remember God, Who set up the heavens without any visible columns, is firm in power, has the sun and moon under His control, and made them move. He spread out the earth and set the chains of mountains on it. He made the rivers and springs flow and caused different kinds of fruits to grow. He divided the earth into neighboring strips and created gardens for grapes, dates, and different agricultural allotments that are all irrigated with the same water—He raises the dead. It is very surprising that the unbelievers say:

وَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَإِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ...

After we are dead and gone, shall we reappear in new clothing? It continues through to the seventh verse, which says:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

...and the unbelievers say, "Why is a miracle not revealed to him from his Lord?" You are just a warner and every nation has a guide. (13:7)

It is clear from this that the unbelievers did not accept the Glorious Qur'an, which is a patent miracle and was sent down as the Truth. Instead, they wanted odd and strange miracles. That is why the Prophet says in response to their demands:

> Bringing other odd and strange miracles that you desire breaches natural law. On a whim, you try to compel me to do things such as transforming a mountain into gold, making liquid gold run in streams, turning a garden into a garden full of jewels and pearls, raising the dead, bringing visible angels down from the sky, having a heavenly scripture descend for you to touch, and so on, most of which are ridiculous and totally wrong, because they require the physical manifestation of God in a particular place. Therefore, these kinds of miracles are never in man's best interests. Even though many prophets performed miracles, they did not all break the laws of nature. It was not such that the prophets performed miracles on demand. That is, they were not there to shut down their main commission, surrender themselves to the nation, and always perform miracles for them.
>
> I have come to warn you against disbelief and ugliness; this is my message and task.

Here, the Prophet would be entitled to tell them: "My undeniable, scientific and everlasting miracle is this Qur'an, which logically invites people to wisdom and knowledge and emphasizes it." He then challenges the *jinn* and man to come together and help each other bring ten chapters or even one chapter like the Qur'an. Moreover, the verses themselves are a miracle, with their amazing style and sound logic comprising truths, subtleties, and laws in tune with man's innate religiosity, which wants what is best for humanity. With such a loud call for justice and piety, good deeds, an invitation to put others before oneself, giving charity, etc., it is like the interconnected loops of a chain, an absolute miracle inviting people to righteousness.

"The fact that my God has sent down these verses, within which He has introduced me as the Prophet, is the best witness—therefore, they are the best miracle both rationally and spiritually."

However, the Prophet does not answer them like this, holding back for the next time, instead saying: "God is aware of what every pregnant female has in her womb, is the Knower of what is secret and manifest, has equal knowledge of what is whispered or said out loud.

He created the lightning and the rain-bearing clouds in the sky—the lightning and angels glorify Him with praise of Him as do the angels out of fear of him."

Then, he states, "The invitation of God is right, and those who accept this invitation are prosperous. Whatever exists in the heavens and on earth prostrates before Him, and the unbelievers who associate partners with Him are wrong." He continues like this up to verse 19:

أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Is he who knows that what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, like someone who is blind? Only the sensible will take heed. (13:19)

Even though this verse is concerned with refuting what the unbelievers have to say, it is also linked to the first verse in the chapter, emphasizing the righteousness of the Book. It predicates all the verses explaining God's greatness and power and indeed the Qur'an itself. It is indubitable truth. Whoever denies it is blind. It then describes the sensible people who accept the Qur'an, saying: "They are those who keep their covenant with God, do not break their promise, and maintain good relations with those whom God has enjoined maintaining good relations with, fear God, fear an unfavorable reckoning, perform prayers, and give of their own property, secretly and openly." He continues this way up to verse 27.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ

And those who disbelieve say, "Why is a sign not sent down to him from his Lord?!" Say, "God lets anyone He pleases go astray, and guides towards Him anyone who is penitent." (13:27).

Here again, He sets out the unbelievers' objection to an odd or strange miracle not being sent down to him; He thus makes us understand that the unbelievers are persistent in their demand, do not accept the Qur'an as the miracle, and still want another miracle.

He still does not dismiss their question by referring to the Qur'an as the best miracle, postponing it and calling God as his witness to his Prophethood. He just says that guidance and allowing to stray are in God's Hands. Someone who believes in God, turns to Him, and removes the veils of ignorance from his heart will be guided by God. However, someone who fails to do so, and strays, will be allowed to stray, by God.

Again, He continues explaining the attributes of the people who trust in God and walk the straight path. They are those whose hearts are at rest through mentioning God; however, those who turn away from God will not benefit from any miracle. When the people's hearts

are not in a state of agreement with and submission to the Truth, they see miracles as witchcraft, magic, and lies. Thus He states in verse 31:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۗ بَل لِّلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَيْأَسِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَن لَّوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَهَدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

And if there were a Qur'an by which mountains were moved, or by which the earth were travelled, or with which the dead were made to speak out...But all command is God's. Do those who believe not know that if God had willed, He could have guided all the people? Disaster will continue to strike those who disbelieve because of what they produce, or settle down close to their home until God's promise is kept. Surely God does not break a promise. (13:31)

These verses clearly explain that the reason for not accepting the Qur'an is the heart's not stooping to accept the Truth and submit to reality. If they do not believe in this, the greatest miracle—the Qur'an—then what miracle will they believe in? It then cites previous nations who did not believe in their prophets out of stubbornness and rebelliousness, and cites the believers who will go to Heaven because they accepted the Truth and then the messengers who came to guide men with miracles, but the nations responded to them with trickery and deceit. It continues up to the final verse of the chapter:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا ۚ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

Those who disbelieve, say, "You are not a messenger." Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between you and me." (13:43)

Here, it becomes quite clear that when the unbelievers did not accept the greatest miracle, the Qur'an, and the Prophet did not bring them the miracles they demanded, they rejected the prophecy completely. Initially, they had not denied it and they were waiting for another miracle, but later on, when they despaired of receiving another miracle, they rejected him completely. On both occasions the Prophet's response, which was entirely proper, given the Qur'an's truthfulness and miraculousness, was to say [words to this effect]: "Unbelievers! This Qur'an, which is the greatest miracle, has been revealed to me, and in this Qur'an, God bears witness to my prophetic mission, as does he who has all the knowledge of the Qur'an."

Accordingly, God's testimony does not refer to the unseen or unknown, and does not make a claim without presenting proof; because God's testimony in the Qur'an and the testimony of the man who has

all the knowledge of the Book is visible and known, and clear to the unbelievers. Proof of the validity of this claim is the *a priori* inimitability of the Qur'an. That is why this noble verse is linked to the whole chapter and answers all the objections raised by the unbelievers and the pagans; it addresses the first verse and the 19th verse, which confirms the righteousness of the Book. The beginning, middle, and end are thus joined together coherently with a good beginning and good ending, such that if this verse were omitted, something would be missing from the chapter.

What It Means for the Prophet to Call God as a Witness

The time has come, after a brief overview of this verse, for detailed exegesis:

قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between you and me."

Here, God's testifying to His Messenger's prophethood is to state it. As He says:

إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

"You are surely one of the envoys, on a Straight Path" (36:3–4)
and all the verses that say:

يا ايها الرسول

O, Messenger or

يا ايها النبي،

O, Prophet or refer to him by various titles, such as

محمد رسول الله،

Muhammad is God's Messenger

هو الذي ارسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق،

He it is Who sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth

واطيعوا الله ورسوله،

Obey God and His Messenger

ولله العزة ولرسوله وللمؤمنين،

God's is all the power, and His Messenger's and the believers'

وما محمد الا رسول،

Muhammad is naught but a messenger

واللہ یعلم انک لرسولہ

And God knows that you are His messenger

یاایھاالذین آمنوا اتقوا اللہ وآمنوا برسولہ

O, you who believe, fear God and believe in His messenger

The Qur'an is full of similar titles; and God bears witness through these statements He makes in the Qur'an.

Fakhr Rāzī says: "Here, the testimony means that God, the Exalted, has made miracles appear that prove the truthfulness of [Muhammad's] claim to be a messenger [testimony through action as opposed to oral testimony] and that is the highest level of testimony."[115] However, this is not correct because the Prophet did not perform the miracles or cause the disruptions to the natural order demanded by the unbelievers. That just leaves the Qur'an. What need is there for us to consider revelation of the Qur'an per se in such circumstances to be God's testimony through action? On the contrary, in the Qur'an, testimony, in its true sense of oral testimony, often pertains to the Noblest Prophet's mission.[116] Furthermore, Fakhr Rāzī's claim that practical testimony is better and stronger than oral testimony is not true.

The claim by some that it just means God's being called as a witness as opposed to actually giving evidence is also wrong, because what use is such testimony? How can it bear fruit for them? That would just refer the matter back to the unseen, making the words meaningless, because there would be no way to prove it to the unbelievers who denied it.

Various Opinions on *Whoever Has All the Knowledge of the Book*

As for:

وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

...and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book, some say that it means God Himself. Fakhr Rāzī attributes this opinion to Hasan al-Baṣrī, Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr, and Zajjāj.[117] Zamakhsharī[118] and Fakhr Rāzī[119] quote Hasan al-Baṣrī as saying:

لا واللہ ما یعنی الا اللہ

"By God, it can only mean God."

Suyūṭī says: "Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mundhir, and Ibn Ḥātim quote Mujāhid as saying: "It means God."

This explanation is not correct either, because firstly it is contrary to the apparent meaning of the conjunction, which is semantic differentiation. Secondly, joining an adjective to the noun it describes is wrong, as Fakhr Rāzī himself says: "It is not correct to say:

شهد بهذا زيد والفقيه

'Zayd and the jurisprudent bore witness to this,' if we mean by the jurisprudent Zayd himself. Instead we say:

شهد بهذا زيد الفقيه

'Zayd the jurisprudent bore witness to this.'"

ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī explicitly states: "This is why Zamakhsharī reinterprets Hasan al-Baṣrī's words, replacing the first phrase with an adjectival one and saying:

كفى بالذى يستحق العبادة وبالذى لا يعلم علم ما فى اللوح المحفوظ الا هو شهيدا بينى وبينكم.[120]

"He Who deserves to be worshiped, and apart from Whom no one knows what is in the Guarded Tablet, suffices as witness between me and you." He replaces the word "Allah," meaning God qua God, with the adjectival phrase

الذى يستحق العبادة

(He Who deserves to be worshipped).[121]

It is only natural that it should be Zamakhsharī explaining it this way to excuse the baseness of the claim, and find an explanation for Hasan al-Baṣrī's exegesis.

But we should realize that replacing a word with another one that means something correct does not mean the original word is correct. Because the word *Allah*, which means God qua God, is in the Qurʾan, joining the adjective to it with a conjunction is vulgar. Moreover, it would be appropriate to attribute to God qua God (Allah)—with all His attributes of perfection as opposed to adjectivally—God's testimony to the Prophet's being a messenger, which we said means the Qurʾanic verses confirming his being a messenger. This is because the testimony of God qua God is greater than any other testimony:

قال سبحانه: قل اى شىء اكبر شهادة قل الله شهيد بينى وبينكم.

...Say, "What is the greatest testimony?" Say, "God is a Witness between me and you." (6:19)

What Zajjāj says—that God would not call anyone else as a witness to the righteousness of His judgment—is not correct, because as Fakhr Rāzī says, "How can it be possible that God would swear by the fig and olive to the truthfulness of what He has said, but not possible

that He would call as a witness *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book?*"[122]

The second possible explanation is that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means Jewish and Christian scholars; accordingly, Suyūṭī says:

> Ibn Jarīr narrates on the authority of ʿAwfī that Ibn ʿAbbās was asked: "Who has all the knowledge of the Book?"
>
> He answered:
>
> هم اهل الكتاب من اليهود والنصارى.[123]
>
> "They are the People of Book—the Jews and the Christians."
>
> It is because the Jews and Christians have read in the Gospels and the Torah about the signs of the prophet who would come at the end of time. They also have the Good News brought by the prophets.

This explanation is not correct either, because the blessed verse refers to all the knowledge of the Book, not just some of it. People say this chapter was revealed to the Prophet in Mecca, and none of the Jews or Christians believed in him or bore witness to his prophetic mission at that time.

In Mecca, the Prophet only struggled with and called to the pagans from Quraysh. It would make no sense for God's Messenger to rely on the testimony of anyone who had not testified to his prophethood. Some people say that being a witness just means being called as a witness without necessarily actually having to give evidence. The witness also does not necessarily have to be a believer when called. Therefore, *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means Jewish and Christian scholars called to give evidence of what the Gospels and Torah say, even if they had not yet become believers when the verse was revealed.[124]

This explanation is also wrong, because the basis of God's Messenger's argument against the Qurayshī polytheists would be the People of the Book's scholars' knowledge, even though they had not yet become believers or acknowledged him as a messenger. The testimony of someone who does not believe in or acknowledge him as a messenger cannot be correct. And if this is acceptable, the Prophet could simply refer to the polytheists' own knowledge, because the Qur'an's inimitability was clear to them and the case was completed against them. That is, he should have called them as witnesses to his

being a messenger, so why call the People of the Book instead? Moreover, the unbelievers were partners to the People of the Book in denying the Message and disbelieving.

Besides, we said that "sufficing as a witness" means actually giving evidence as opposed to merely being called as a witness, because calling God alone as witness would not have stopped the pagans and just referred the matter to the unseen.

The third possible explanation is that the Book means the Guarded Tablet and him who has knowledge of it, namely Gabriel.[125] Suyūṭī says: "Ibn Abī Ḥātim quotes Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr as saying by way of exegesis of the verse:

من عنده علم الكتاب جبريل.

and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book (13:43): 'Gabriel.'"

This explanation is not correct either, because what use is Gabriel's testimony to the unbelievers if they do not believe in him, and it just constitutes a promise of the unseen, which in their book means avoiding the issue? So even if the Prophet had, instead of just calling Gabriel, called all God's angels as witness—Michael, Raphael, Azrael, and the rest of the heavenly host—it would have been useless for the unbelievers.

The fourth possible explanation is that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means Jewish and Christian scholars who believed in and testified to the Prophet's Message, such as ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, Salmān Fārsī, Jārūd, and Tamīm Dārī.[126] Suyūṭī says:

> ʿAbd al-Razzāq, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mundhir, and Ibn Abī Ḥātim quote Qatādah as saying:
>
> كان من اهل الكتاب قوم يشهدون بالحق ويعرفونه، منهم عبدالله بن سلام والجارود وتميم الدارى وسلمان الفارسى.[127]
>
> Some of the People of the Book would testify to the truth and acknowledge it. They include ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, Jārūd, Tamīm Dārī, and Salmān Fārsī.

This is also incorrect, because they all embraced Islam in Medina, whereas the blessed verse:

قل الله شهيد بينى وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتب

was revealed in Mecca, which does not make sense—the Prophet arguing with the Qurayshī pagans in Mecca, and then having the people of Medina bear witness to his message!

The claim by some that revelation of this verse in Mecca is not inconsistent with future testimony is meaningless. This kind of argument is not valid and is too weak to be accepted. It means that a group of people said:

لست مرسلا

You are not a Messenger, and they were told: "I am the Prophet of God, so believe in me, because a few years later, in Medina, some scholars among the People of the Book will testify to it." This is extremely weak.[128]

The fifth possible explanation is that it is about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, a Medinan Jewish scholar who became a Muslim after God's Messenger migrated there.

Suyūṭī says:

Ibn Saᶜd, Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Jarīr, and Ibn Mundhir say:

انه كان يقرأ: «ومن عنده علم الكتب»، قال: هو عبد الله بن سلام.[129]

[Mujāhid] would recite: *...and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book.* (13:43) He would say, "It is ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām."

Those who say this verse is about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām have had to exert great efforts to defend their claim, because it is also void and baseless. As stated above, verse 13 of Sūrat al-Raᶜd (The Thunder) is Meccan, whereas ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim in Medina, so calling him as a witness against the Meccan pagans avoids the issue; God forbid!

Some people say: "The revelation of a chapter in Mecca is not inconsistent with some of its verses being Medinan. It is possible that all the verses of Sūrat al-Raᶜd were revealed in Mecca except this one, which was revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām in Medina." The answer is that mere possibility does not prove the verse is Meccan without any authentic and reliable hadith evidence. Apart from there not being any such proof, the majority accept that this verse is Meccan—as is also related from *al-Baḥr*.[130]

Suyūṭī says:

Saᶜīd Ibn Manṣūr, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and Naḥḥās in *al-Nāsikh* say about Saᶜīd Ibn Jubayr:

سئل عن قوله: ومن عنده علم الكتب أهو عبد الله بن سلام رضى الله عنه؟ قال: وكيف وهذه السورة مكية؟[131]

He was asked about *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book.* "Is it ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām?" He replied: "How can it be when this chapter is Meccan?"

Ibn ᶜAbd al-Birr explains in the biographical entry on ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām:

وقد قيل في قول الله عز وجل: ومن عنده علم الكتاب هو عبد الله بن سلام وانكر ذلك عكرمة والحسن وقالا: كيف يكون ذلك والسورة مكية وإسلام عبد الله بن سلام كان بعد.[132]

It is said that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām. However, ᶜIkrimah and Hasan deny this and say: "How can it be when the chapter is Meccan and ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim later on?"

Suyūṭī quotes Ibn Mundhir as saying:

ما نزل في عبد الله بن سلام رضي الله عنه شيء من القرآن.[133]

Suyūṭī also says that ᶜAbd al-Razzāq and Ibn Mundhir quote Zuhrī as saying:

كان عمر بن الخطاب شديدا على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم، فانطلق يوما حتى دنا من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم وهو يصلي فسمعه وهو يقرأ: «وما كنت تتلو من قبله من كتب ولا تخطه بيمينك اذا لارتاب المبطلون» حتى بلغ «الظالمون». وسمعه وهو يقرأ: «يقول الذين كفروا لست مرسلا» الى قوله «علم الكتاب»، فانتظره حتى سلم فأسرع في أثره فأسلم.[134]

Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was a fierce enemy of God's Messenger. One day he set off, eventually approaching God's Messenger and hearing him recite: *You did not recite from any scripture before it or write it with your right hand, for then those who say untrue things could have doubted.* (29:48)

He [also] heard him recite: *Those who disbelieve say, "You are not a messenger...all the knowledge of the Book..."* (13:43)

[Omar] waited for him to utter the [final] greeting, ran after him, and became a Muslim.

Everyone knows that Omar became a Muslim six years after the commencement of the prophetic mission in Mecca, and this proves that the verse

كفى بالله شهيدا

God suffice as a Witness...(13:43) was revealed in Mecca and not in Medina—so it has nothing to do with ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām.

It is clear from everything we have said at length that all the verses in Sūrat al-Raʿd are linked together like a chain. This verse is linked to the first one and to verse 19 and is also an answer to the unbelievers' challenge referred to in verses 7 and 27 such that the chapter is summarized in this verse. It is wholly inappropriate to say that the entire chapter was revealed in Mecca with the exception of the last verse, which was revealed years later, in Medina. It is extraordinary that some people, such as Abū al-Suʿūd[135] and Ibn Taymiyyah claim that this verse was revealed in Medina.

The sixth possible explanation is that *the Book* means the Glorious Qur'an and that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means whoever has all the knowledge of the Glorious Qur'an. This is [Ḥātim] al-Aṣamm's opinion.[136] It means: "Whoever has been given the meaning of this Qur'an to bear and been conferred with its knowledge is a witness to the fact that it is from God and that I am God's Messenger." Thus the end of the chapter refers back to the beginning where He states:

تلك ءايت الكتب والذى انزل اليك من ربك الحق

These are the verses of the Book and that which has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth and to this verse, in the middle of the chapter:

افمن يعلم انما انزل اليك من ربك الحق كمن هو اعمى.

Is one who knows that what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, like someone who is blind?

In fact, this testimony from whoever has all the knowledge of the Glorious Qur'an to the unbelievers is God's emphasizing the truthfulness of the Book and the message in response to the unbelievers who said twice:

لولا انزل عليه آية من ربه

Why is a miracle not revealed to him from his Lord? Here, they say:

لست مرسلا

You are not a Messenger.

As a response to all these challenges comes: God, my Lord is a Witness to my message in this inimitable Qur'an. He who has all the knowledge of the inimitable Qur'an is also a witness. This is the best proof that the verse is Meccan. It supports the many hadiths related by both Shiʿa and Sunnis, which explicitly state that *whoever has all the*

knowledge of the Book means the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, followed by the Imams from the Household.

Hadiths That Say That Imam Ali is He Who *Has All the Knowledge of the Book*

From among the Sunnis, Thaʿlabī[137] and Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī,[138] each via his own chain of transmission, quote Muhammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, and, from among the Shiʿa, Ṣaffār in *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, via his chain of transmission on the authority of Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī,[139] quotes Imam Bāqir, and, via his chain of transmission from Fuḍayl Ibn Yasār, also quotes Imam Bāqir.[140] Via a chain of transmission from Fuḍayl Ibn Yasār, ʿAyyāshi quotes Imam Bāqir[141] as saying:

هذه الآية نزلت في علي بن أبي طالب

"This verse was revealed about Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

The last two hadiths add:

وانه عالم هذه الامة بعد النبي.

"And indeed he is the learned one of this nation after the Prophet."

Ṣaffār, via his chain of transmission from Jābir, Burayd Ibn Muʿāwiyah and Fuḍayl Ibn Yasār from Imam Bāqir, and via his chain of transmission from ʿAbdullāh Ibn Bukayr and Abdullāh Ibn Kathīr Hāshimī from Imam Ṣādiq, and, via his chain of transmission from Salmān Fārsī from the Master of the Faithful, says that this verse was revealed about the Master of the Faithful.[142]

Qundūzī Ḥanafī quotes Thaʿlabī and Ibn al-Maghāzilī, who, via their chains of transmission quote ʿAbdullāh Ibn ʿAṭṭār as saying:

قال: كنت مع محمد الباقر ـ رضي الله عنه ـ في المسجد فرأيت ابن عبد الله بن سلام، فقلت: هذا ابن الذي عنده علم الكتاب؟ قال: انما ذلك علي بن أبي طالب.[143]

"I was in the mosque with Imam Bāqir when I saw ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām's son, so I asked: 'Is he the son of *whoever has the all the knowledge of the Book*?' [The Imam replied]: 'He who *has all the knowledge of the Book* is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, via his chain of transmission, quotes Abū Saʾīd Khudrī as saying:

قال: سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم عن قول الله تعالى: ومن عنده علم الكتاب. قال: ذاك اخي علي بن أبي طالب.[144]

"I asked God's Messenger about *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book*. He replied: "That is my brother, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Ḥākim quotes Abū Ṣāliḥ as saying with regard to the Mighty and Exalted's words:

قوله عزوجل: ومن عنده علم الكتب قال رجل من قريش: هو علي ولكنه لا نسميه.[145]

Whoever has all the knowledge of the Book: a man from Quraysh, that is, Ali. However, we do not mention his name.

Abū Ṣāliḥ

is also quoted as saying:

ومن عنده علم الكتب قال: علي بن أبي طالب، كان عالما بالتفسير والتأويل والناسخ والمنسوخ والحلال والحرام.[146]

"*And whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* [means] Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. He knew exegesis, [non-literal] interpretation, that which abrogates and that which is abrogated, that which is lawful and that which is unlawful."

Qundūzī Ḥanafī narrates a similar hadith from Ibn ᶜAbbās.[147]

Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates from both Sunnis and Shiᶜa—from Muhammad Ibn Muslim, Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī, and Jābir Ibn Yazīd, from Imam Bāqir, and from Ali Ibn Faḍḍāl, Fuḍayl Ibn Yasār, and Abū Baṣīr from Imam Ṣādiq, and from Ahmad Ibn Muhammad al-Ḥalabī and Muhammad Ibn Fuḍayl from Imams Riḍā and Mūsā Ibn Jaᶜfar, and, from Zayd Ibn Ali, Muhammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, Salmān Fārsī, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, and Ismaʿīl al-Saddī:

انهم قالوا في قوله تعالى: قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتب، هو علي بن أبي طالب.[148]

"They all say that *Say, 'God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you'* means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb quotes Thaᶜlabī's exegesis, on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā, who said: "I was with Muhammad al-Bāqir in the mosque and saw ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām's son, so I asked, 'Is this he who *has all the knowledge of the Book*?' He replied, 'That is none other than Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"

Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr was asked "Does *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* mean ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām?" He replied: "How can it be when this chapter is Meccan?"

Ibn ᶜAbbās said: "*Whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means none other than Ali. He knew exegesis, [non-literal] interpretation, that which abrogates, and that which is abrogated."

It is narrated from Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah: "My father, the Commander of the Faithful Ali, has the first and last knowledge of the Book."

Naṭanzī cites in *al-Khaṣā'iṣ*[149] everything Thaʿlabī narrates from both Sunnis and Shiʿa regarding the meaning of *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book*.

Shaykh Ali Ibn Yūnus Nabāṭī ʿĀmilī says in *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (*The Straight Path*): "Thaʿlabī's exegesis quotes Ibn ʿAṭā as saying: 'I saw ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām's son, so I asked: "Is this he whose father had all the knowledge of the Book?" He replied: "No, that was none other than Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."'"

Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī has related a similar hadith via two different chains of narration from Muhammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah. Thaʿlabī then says: "This hadith is attributable to Ibn Omar, Jābir, Abū Hurayrah and Ayishe."[150]

The jurisprudent Ibn al-Maghāzilī Shāfiʿī, via his chain of transmission, quotes Ali Ibn Ḥābis as saying:

> Abū Maryam and I went to see ʿAbdullāh Ibn ʿAṭā, and Abū Maryam told ʿAbdullāh: "Tell ʿAlī [Ibn Ḥābis] the hadith that you related to me from Abū Jaʿfar [Imam Bāqir]." Ibn ʿAṭā said:
>
> > I was with Abu Jaʿfar [Imam Bāqir] when ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām's son passed him. I asked: "May I be made your sacrifice, is this the son of *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book*?"
> >
> > He replied:
> >
> > > No, on the contrary it is your Master, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, about whom several verses of God's Book were revealed:
> > >
> > > ومن عنده علم الكتب،
> > >
> > > *and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book...* (13:43)
> > >
> > > افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه،
> > >
> > > *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...* (11:17)
> > >
> > > انما وليكم الله ورسوله والذين ءامنوا
> > >
> > > *Your guardian can only be God, His messenger and those who believe...* (5:55)[151]

Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī via his chain of transmission from Burayd Ibn Muʿāwiyah,[152] ʿAyyāshī in his exegesis on the authority of Burayd Ibn Muʿāwiyah,[153] and Ṣaffār in *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt* via his chain of transmission from Burayd Ibn Muʿāwiyah[154] all relate:

قال: قلت لأبي جعفر عليه السلام: قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب. قال: ايانا عنى، وعلي افضلنا واولنا وخيرنا بعد النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم.

[Burayd Ibn Muʿāwiyah] says: "I said to Abū Jaʿfar [Imam Bāqir]:

قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب

'*Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a witness between me and you."* (13:43)' He said: 'It means us alone, and Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib is the first and best of us after God's Messenger.'"

Shaykh Ṣadūq, via his chain of transmission from Aṭiyyah al-ʿAwfī, quotes Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī as saying:

قال: سألت رسول الله عن قول الله جل ثناؤه قال الذي عنده علم من الكتاب. قال: ذاك وصي اخي سليمان بن داود. قلت له: يا رسول الله قول الله: قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب؟ قال: ذاك اخي علي بن أبي طالب.[155]

[Abū Saʿīd] says:

> I asked God's Messenger about God's words, Sublime is His Remembrance:
>
> قال الذي عنده علم من الكتاب
>
> *He who had knowledge from the Book said...* (27:40) and he replied: "That is my brother, Solomon son of David's executor." I then said to him: "God's Messenger,
>
> "قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب"
>
> *Say, 'God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you.'* (13:43)"
>
> He said: "That is my brother, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

The Imams, Beginning with Ali, Have All the Knowledge of the Book

Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī, via his chain of transmission from Muhammad Ibn Sulaymān, from his father, quotes Sudayr [al-Ṣayrafī] as saying:

قال: كنت انا وابو بصير ويحيى البزاز وداود بن كثير في مجلس ابي عبدالله عليه السلام اذ خرج علينا وهو مغضب، فلما اخذ مجلسه قال: يا عجبا لاقوام يزعمون انا نعلم الغيب، لا يعلم الغيب الا الله عز وجل، لقد هممت بضرب جاريتي فهربت مني فما علمت في اي بيوت الدار هي. قال: سدير فلما ان قام من مجلسه وصار في منزله، دخلت انا وابو بصير وميسر وقلنا: جعلنا الله فداك سمعنا وانت تقول كذا وكذا في امر جاريتك ونحن نعلم انك تعلم علما كثيرا ولا ننسبك الى علم الغيب؟ قال: فقال: يا سدير اما تقرأ القرآن؟ قلت: بلى. قال: فهل وجدت فيما قرأت من كتاب الله عز وجل: قال الذي عنده علم من الكتاب انا اتيك به قبل ان يرتد اليك طرفك؟ قال: قلت: جعلت فداك قد قرأته. قال: فهل عرفت الرجل وهل علمت ما كان عنده من علم الكتاب؟ قال: قلت: اخبرني به. قال: قدر قطرة من ماء البحر الاخضر، فما يكون ذلك من علم الكتاب؟ قال: قلت: جعلت فداك: ما اقل هذا، فقال: يا سدير: ما اكثر هذا ان ينسبه الله عز وجل الى العلم الذي اخبرك به يا سدير فهل وجدت ما قرأت في كتاب الله عز وجل ايضا: قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب؟ قال: قلت: قرأته جعلت فداك قال: فمن عنده علم الكتاب كله افهم ام من عنده علم الكتاب بعضه؟ قلت: لا، بل من عنده علم الكتاب كله. قال: فاومى بيده الى صدره وقال: علم الكتاب والله كله عندنا، علم الكتاب والله كله عندنا.

وروى هذا الحديث ايضا الصفار في «بصائر الدرجات» بتغيير يسير بزيادة ونقصان.[156]

Abū Baṣīr, Yaḥyā Bazzāz, Dāwūd Ibn Kathīr, and I were at Abū ʿAbdillāh's [Imam Jaʿfar Ṣādiq's] gathering, when he came out angrily to us. Then, when he had taken his place, he said: "It's amazing that some people claim that we have knowledge of the unseen! No one but God, Mighty and Sublime is He, knows the unseen. I almost struck my serving-girl, but she ran away, and I did not know which room of the house she was in!"

[Sudayr says:] When he stood up from his place and went to his house, Abū Baṣīr, Muyassir, and I entered, and we asked: "May God make us your sacrifice. We heard you say such-and-such about your serving-girl. We know that you know a lot, but we do not attribute knowledge of the unseen to you."

[The Imam] asked: "Sudayr, have you read the Qurʾan?"

I replied: "Yes."

Then he asked:

> Did you find in what you have read of God's Book, Mighty and Sublime is He:
>
> قال الذي عنده علم من الكتاب انا اتيك به قبل ان يرتد اليك طرفك؟
>
> *He who had knowledge of the Book said, "I shall bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye!* (27:40)"?

I said: "May I be made your sacrifice, I have read it."

[Sayyid Ṭihranī's explanatory comment:] As Solomon had invited Bilqīs, the Queen of Sheba, to become a Muslim, to ensure Sheba did not think they were superior to Solomon, they were all supposed to come to Solomon in a state of surrender. When he was sitting in his assembly with the tribe of the *jinn*, whom he headed:

قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ؟

...He said, "O chiefs, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?" (27:38)

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ءَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ.

An ifrīt from among the jinn said: "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place and most surely I am strong and trusty." (27:39)

Then, he who had some knowledge of the Book (Āṣif, Ibn Barkhiyā, who was Solomon's executor and vizier), said: "But, I shall bring you Bilqīs's throne in the twinkling of an eye"—[and he did].

When Solomon saw Bilqīs's throne before him, he said: "This is some of my Lord's bounty, to test whether I am grateful or ungrateful [for his endless bounties]."

Then [the Imam] asked: "Do you know the man and do you know what knowledge of the Book he had?" I said: "Tell me." [The Imam] stated: "A drop in the ocean. What is that out of all the knowledge of the Book?!" I said: "May I be made your sacrifice, how little this is!"

[He said:] "Sudayr, how much it is that God attributes to me the knowledge that I tell you about! Sudayr, have you also found amongst what you have read in God's Book, Mighty and Sublime is He: *Say, God and whoever has all the whole knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you?* (13:43)"

I said: "I have read it, may I be made your sacrifice."

[The Imam] asked: "Now, is he who has all the knowledge of the Book more understanding, or he who has some knowledge of the Book?"

I answered: "No, he who has all the knowledge." He then pointed to his chest and said: "We have all the knowledge of the Book, by God. We have all the knowledge of the Book, by God."

Ṣaffār cites this hadith in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, worded slightly differently, with some additions and some omissions; Qundūzī Ḥanafī cites an abridged version of it.[157]

Qundūzī also relates on the authority of Omar Ibn Udhaynah from Imam Ṣādiq:

قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عليه السلام: أَلَا إِنَّ الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي هَبَطَ بِهِ آدَمُ عليه السلام مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَجَمِيعَ مَا فُضِّلَتْ بِهِ النَّبِيُّونَ إِلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ فِي عِتْرَةِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم.[158]

"Ali said: 'Lo, all the knowledge that Adam brought down to earth from Heaven and everything with which all the Prophets—right up to the Seal of the Prophets—were endowed with is in the family of the Seal of the Prophets.'"

In *al-Iḥtijāj*, Shaykh Ṭabarsī cites via his chain of transmission from Walīd Sammān:

قَالَ: قَالَ لِي أَبُو عَبْدِ اللهِ عليه السلام: مَا يَقُولُ النَّاسُ فِي أُولِي الْعَزْمِ وَعَنْ صَاحِبِكُمْ - يَعْنِي أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ -؟ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: مَا يُقَدِّمُونَ عَلَى أُولِي الْعَزْمِ أَحَداً. فَقَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى قَالَ عَنْ مُوسَى: «وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً» وَلَمْ يَقُلْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ. وَقَالَ عَنْ عِيسَى: «وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ» وَلَمْ يَقُلْ كُلَّ الَّذِي تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ. وَقَالَ عَنْ صَاحِبِكُمْ يَعْنِي أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عليه السلام: «قُلْ كَفَى بِاللهِ شَهِيداً بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ»، فَقَالَ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ»، وَعِلْمُ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ عِنْدَهُ.[159]

[Walīd Sammān] says:

[Imam Ja'far Ṣādiq] asked me: "What do people say about the arch-prophets and about your Master (*ṣāḥibikum*), the Master of the Faithful?" I replied: "They do not consider anyone to be superior to the arch-prophets." The Holiness stated:

> Blessed and Exalted God says about Moses: *And We wrote some warning about everything* (*min kull shay'*) *for him on the Tablets*, (7:145) but

> He did not say everything (*kull shay'*). He says about Jesus: *...and to make clear some of what you disagree about* (43:63), but He did not say everything. However, He says about your Master, the Master of the Faithful: *Say: God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you* (13:43). Moreover, God states: *there is no...or anything green or withered which is not in a clear Book* (6:59), and [Ali] has all the knowledge of this Book.

Qundūzī Ḥanafī cites an abridged version of this hadith.

Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm narrates on the authority of Omar Ibn Udhaynah in his exegesis:

قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللهِ عليه السلام: «الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ» أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عليه السلام. وسُئِلَ عَنِ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ أَعْلَمُ أَمْ مَنِ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ. قَالَ: مَا عِلْمُ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِقَدْرِ مَا تَأْخُذُ الْبَعُوضَةُ بِجَنَاحِهَا مِنْ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ. قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ: أَلَا إِنَّ الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي هَبَطَ بِهِ آدَمُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَجَمِيعَ مَا فُضِّلَتْ بِهِ النَّبِيُّونَ إِلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ فِي عِتْرَةِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ[160]

He said:

> [Imam Ṣādiq] stated: "*Whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* is the Master of the Faithful." He was asked whether *he who had knowledge of the Book* or *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* knows more, so he replied: "Know: *he who had knowledge of the Book* only had as much as a gnat takes with its wing from the water of the sea. Regarding this, the Master of the Faithful said: 'Lo, all the knowledge that Adam brought down to earth from Heaven, and everything that all the prophets—right up to the Seal of the Prophets—were endowed with is in the family of the Seal of the Prophets.'"

Qundūzī Ḥanafī cites an abridged version of this hadith.[161]

In any case, it is clear from all the above that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means the Master of the Faithful, ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and that any other explanation is wrong. How can it not mean Ali, who stayed with the Holy Prophet throughout his prophetic mission, day and night, on journeys and at home, in wartime and peace, and mean ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, who became a Muslim in Medina 13 years after the commencement of the prophetic mission?!

Besides, ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, according to the biographical entry on him, did not even pledge allegiance to Ali or attest to his Imamate, so how could God's Messenger call him along with God as witness to his prophetic mission!

Biographical Note on ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām

In *Rijāl*, Barqī lists him as one of the Prophet's companions;[162] Ibn Dāwūd puts him in chapter one of *Rijāl*,[163] i.e. he categorizes him as a reliable non-Twelver narrator (*min al-muwaththaqīn*). However, the author of *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl* says that many people listed by Ibn Dāwūd in chapter one are criticized as weak and ignorant in chapter two.

Moreover, he says:

> In my opinion, ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām's status is unknown. That means his hadiths are unreliable. The three shaykhs of narrator categorization also consider him to be one of God's Messenger's companions, describing him as ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, later the Helper (*Anṣārī*). They say that he made a pact with the Banī Qaynuqāᶜ—and was of Joseph son of Jacob's offspring. His pre-Islamic name was Husayn. Then, when he migrated to Medina and became a Muslim, God's Messenger renamed him ᶜAbdullāh; according to Abū Aḥmad ᶜAskarī's chronicle, he died in 43 AH. Then, he says:
>
> > His poor status [as a narrator] can be inferred from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd:
> >
> > > After Othman's death, when allegiance was pledged to the Master of the Faithful, the Imam sent for a group to come and pledge allegiance. He was asked: "Are you not going to send for Ḥassān Ibn Thābit, Kaᶜb Ibn Mālik, or ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām?
> > >
> > > He replied:
> > >
> > > لَا حَاجَةَ لَنَا فِيمَنْ لَا حَاجَةَ لَهُ فِينَا...
> > >
> > > "We have no need for anyone who has no need for us."[164]

After citing these words of the Master of the Faithful on the authority of Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, ᶜAllāmah Muhammad Taqī Shūshtarī says: "Ṭabarī and Masᶜūdī also quote what Imam Ali said about him."[165]

However, in Sunni reference books, such as *al-Ṭabāqāt* by Ibn Saᶜd or *Mīzān al-Iᶜtidāl* by al-Dhahabī, I did not find any entry for him. Only Ibn ᶜAbd al-Birr has an entry for him, in which he says:

> Some exegetes say the blessed verse:
>
> وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ فَآمَنَ وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ
>
> *and a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like and believed whereas you are too proud* (46:10), and also the verse:

وَمَن عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ

and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book (13:43) were revealed about him.

He then says: "ʿIkrimah and Hasan deny that this verse is about him, and they say: 'The verse was revealed in Mecca even though ʿAbdullāh became a Muslim in Medina.'" He then adds: "Abū Omar says: 'Sūrat al-Aḥqāf, (the Sand-Dunes), which includes the verse

وشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِن بَنِي اسرائِيلَ...

an Israelite witness testified, was also revealed in Mecca, so neither statement is reliable.'"[166]

Ibn Athīr Jazarī says:

> When the people decided to kill Othman, ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām went to him, and Othman asked him: "Why have you come to me?" ʿAbdullāh replied, "I have come to help you." Othman said: "Go out to the people and keep them away from me. You are more use to me outside than inside."
>
> ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām went out to the people and said:
>
> > People, my name was So-and-So in the time of ignorance, and God's Messenger renamed me ʿAbdullāh. Some verses from God's Book were revealed about me:
> >
> > وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِن بَنِي اسرائِيلَ عَلَى مِثْلِهِ فَآمَنَ وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ...
> >
> > *...and a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like and believed, whereas you are too proud* (46:10), and the blessed verse:
> >
> > قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم وَمَن عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ...
> >
> > *Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you."* (13:43)
> >
> > People! God has a sheathed sword, and the angels have become your neighbors in this town of yours—the town in which God's Messenger came to stay. Fear God, fear God with regard to killing this man. By God, if you kill him, you will cast out your neighbors the angels, and God's sword will be drawn on you and never be sheathed until the Day of Resurrection.
>
> [However,] the people shouted: "Kill Othman, the Jew," so they killed Othman.[167]

It is clear from the above that ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām considered himself to know the whole Book [the Torah] and believed that the verse was revealed about him. As Suyūṭī says:

ᶜIbn Jarīr and Ibn Mardawayh quote ᶜAbd al-Mālik as saying:

> Muhammad Ibn Yusuf Ibn ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, who is ᶜAbdullāh's grandson, says:
>
> قَالَ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ سَلَامٍ: قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ: «قُلْ كَفَى بِاللهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ»[168]
>
> "ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām said: 'God revealed in the Qurʾan: *Say, "God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you."*'"

Suyūṭī also says: Ibn Mardawayh relates from Jundub:

قَالَ: جَاءَ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ سَلَامٍ حَتَّى أَخَذَ بِعِضَادَتَيْ بَابِ الْمَسْجِدِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَنْشُدُكُمْ بِاللهِ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي أَنَا الَّذِي أَنْزَلَتْ فِيهِ: وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ؟ قَالُوا: اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ.[169]

> ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām came, seized the doorposts of the Mosque, and said, "I adjure you by God, do you know that I am he about whom *and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* was revealed?" They replied, "God, yes." So ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, his son, and his grandson all thought this verse was about him.

As explained above, Imam Bāqir refuted [ᶜAbdullāh's] son's claim in front of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā and said: "That is none other than Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib," knowing full well that some of them, like Mujāhid, who claimed that the verse was revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, did so on the basis of their own conjecture, not on the basis of any hadith narrated from God's Messenger.

ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām Is Not He Who Has All the Knowledge of the Book

As stated above, Shaᶜbī says: "None of the Qurʾan was revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām. Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr forcefully denies this claim, saying:

How can it be when this verse is Meccan? Furthermore, when Muᶜāwiyah Ibn Abī Sufyān met Qays Ibn Saᶜd Ibn ᶜUbādah in Medina, Qays told him

وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

...and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book (13:43) was about Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. Muᶜāwiyah retorted: "It is about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām," so Qays said:

> God revealed:
>
> إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ
>
> *...You are just a warner and every nation has a guide* (13:7) and revealed:
>
> أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ
>
> *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...?* (11:17)
>
> [Qays said:] "Guide" in the first verse, and "a witness" in the second verse mean Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, because [the Prophet] appointed him [as Caliph] on the Day of Ghadīr, saying:
>
> مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ
>
> "Whoever's master I am, so [too] is Ali his master," and saying:
>
> أَنْتَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هَارُونَ مِنْ مُوسَىٰ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي
>
> "You are to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that there is no prophet after me."[170]

Muᶜāwiyah fell silent and was unable to respond.

Thus, without the slightest doubt, *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* cannot mean ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām.

So he either considered himself to be an expert on the Torah, saw this verse, namely:

وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book, wrongly interpreted *the Book* as the Torah, and thought the verse was about him, God forbid, or, knowing full well that *the Book* means the Qurʾan, and that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, he deliberately claimed this title. However, no matter what he thought, it is an entirely false claim, as is clear from the above discussion.

These hadiths were wrongly attributed and pieced together by the Umayyads and the enemies of the Master of the Faithful, as is palpable from Muʿāwiyah's discussion with Qays Ibn Saʿd Ibn ʿUbādah.

Muʿāwiyah was frequently accused of trying to reassign the meaning of verses and hadiths about the Master of the Faithful, hiding Ali's virtues and feats by attributing them to others. He could not find anyone else apart from ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām about whom to claim the verse had been revealed. It was clear that he could not nominate Abū Sufyān, or even himself, because they had fought the Muslims right up until the conquest of Mecca. Omar and Abū Bakr were not experts on the Book; the easiest way was to change the meaning of *the Book* from the Qurʾan to the Torah, making ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book.*

However, this corruption [of the meaning] is obvious to scholars—Shaʿbī, Hasan Baṣrī, Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr, and even ʿIkrimah, who were the enemies of Ali, knew that giving this title to ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām was wrong. Nevertheless, the ordinary people, who did not know that Sūrat al-Raʿd was revealed in Mecca, that ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim in Medina, or whether the verse was referring to the Qurʾan or the Torah, knew no better.

We clearly see that enemies of the Household and anti-Shiʿa, like Ibn Taymiyyah and his ilk insist on promoting ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, refusing to give up even in the face of all the hadiths and contextual clues there are. It is here that the truthfulness of this blessed verse in Sūrah al-Raʿd becomes clear:

أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Is he who knows that what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth, like someone who is blind? Only the sensible will take heed. (13:19)

The Imams, Beginning with Ali, Were and Are the Most Knowledgeable about God's Book

Now, it is appropriate to cite what Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī says in *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*. He in turn is quoting another scholar's opinion on the revelation of this verse regarding Ali:

> [A critical researcher says:] God, the Blessed and Exalted, sent the Seal of His Prophets, His noblest Prophet and most esteemed servant, blessing and favoring him with foremost knowledge and grace after having taken the covenants of the previous prophets and His [other] servants to believe in Muhammad and help him in his prophetic mission. Then, because God opened the gates of the greatest happiness and greatest guidance for

Quraysh and the Hāshimites in particular through the message of His beloved with:

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

And warn your nearest relations (26:214)

وَرَهْطُكَ الْمُخْلَصِينَ[171]

it is only logical that *whoever has all the knowledge of the Book* should mean a Hāshimite, making him closer to the Prophet than anyone else from Quraysh, and, should have become a Muslim earlier than the others, so as to know the secrets of the prophetic mission, and, revelation right from the beginning. He has to have been at the Prophet's service at all times, followed the Prophet, known everything he did, been free of pre-Islamic habits right from childhood, and have been brought up with the Prophet's ethics and manners.

This is not true of anyone else but Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. In contrast, ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām only became a Muslim after the Prophet's migration (that is, more than halfway through the prophetic mission). He did not know the reasons for the revelation of the verses before the migration, and could not interpret them correctly even after he had become a Muslim.

If Salmān Fārsī, who spent the 350 years of his long life learning the secrets of the Gospels, Torah, Psalms, and other Scriptures brought by previous prophets, and later the Qurʾan, did not have all the knowledge of the Book—because he did not fulfil the aforementioned criteria—how could ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām, who had not even read the Gospels, fulfil those criteria and have all the knowledge of the Book?!

Nothing issued from ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām like the secrets and truths that issued from Imam Ali, the drone of the believers, such as:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي فَإِنَّ بَيْنَ جَنْبَيَّ عُلُومًا كَالْبِحَارِ الزَّوَاخِرِ

"Ask me before losing me, for indeed there is knowledge like the endless sea within me," or the knowledge and aphorisms interpreting God's Book and secrets that issued from his offspring, the Infallible Imams of Guidance, so how can ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām have had all the knowledge of the Book?![172]

Shaʿbī says:

مَا أَحَدٌ أَعْلَمُ بِكِتَابِ اللهِ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ مِنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ أَوْلَادِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.[173]

"After the Prophet, no one knows more about God's Book than Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib and his righteous offspring."

ᶜĀṣim Ibn Abī al-Nujūd quotes ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Sulamī as saying:

مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَداً أَقْرَأَ مِن عَلِيِّ بنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ.[174]

"I did not see anyone more learned [in the Qurʾan] than Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Abū ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān quotes Ibn Masᶜūd as saying:

لَوَ كُنتُ أَعلَمُ أَحَداً أَعلَمَ بِكِتَابِ اللهِ مِنِّي لَأَتَيتُهُ

"If I had known anyone more learned in God's Book than myself, I would have gone to him."

قَالَ: قُلتُ لَهُ: فَعَلِيٌّ؟ قَالَ: أَوَلَمْ آتِهِ؟

[ᶜAbd al-Rahmān says,] "I asked: 'And Ali?' He answered: 'Did I not go to him?'"

In the light of the above, after the Prophet of God, Ali is the most learned in the nation, and naturally the verse

وَمَن عِندَهُ عِلمُ الكِتَب

is about him. If anyone else had been more learned when the verse was revealed, it would have been about him.

The next question that has to be answered is, why would the Prophet need any other witness apart from God?

The weight carried by that witness's testimony must be close to that carried by God's, and it can be none other than the Master of the Faithful's, the guardian of the Qurʾan's. The Qurʾan is God's oral evidence, and he is God's physical evidence. He is the essence of the Qurʾan, and the Qurʾan translates his being.

These two are a single essence that manifests itself in two forms: oral and physical. They are linked and inseparable.

In fact, when confronting the unbelievers, God's Messenger adduces oral evidence—God's oral evidence of his prophetic mission recorded in the Qurʾan—and physical evidence, which is the focus of the rays of divine light, the manifestation of the Divine Names, who knows both physical decree (*kitāb al-takwīn*) and the book of legislation (*kitāb al-tashrīᶜ*). The evidentiary basis for this is the prophetic hadith narrated and accepted both by Sunnis and Shiᶜa:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي وَلَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ، مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَدًا.[175]

"I am leaving among you two precious things: God's Book and my close family; they will not separate until they come to me at the Pool; as long as you cling to them both, you will never go astray!"

Now, this hadith explains the aforementioned verse, and we can prove through this verse that the Imam is linked to God's Book.

Let it be known that two variant readings are:

وَمِن عِندِهِ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

"...and from Him is all the knowledge of the Book," and:

وَمَن عِندِهِ عُلِمَ الْكِتَابُ

"...and from Him all of the Book was known," according to Suyūṭī.[176] Of course these are variant readings of the Qur'an that are not given any weight. Furthermore, it does not have a tractable meaning because it means the Prophet's saying, "God is my witness, and from Him all of the Book was known."

Although this meaning is inherently correct, and even though, through its description, it presents God as a witness against the Qurayshī polytheists, it loses its sweetness and grace.

In any case, Shaykh Ṭūsī's *Amālī* says:

مَرَّ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَلَإٍ فِيهِم سَلْمَانُ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ سَلْمَانُ: قُومُوا فَاسْأَلُوا هَذَا الْمُجْزِيَ هَذَا. فَوَاللهِ لَا يُخْبِرُكُمْ بِسِرِّ نَبِيِّكُمْ غَيْرُهُ

"The Master of the Faithful passed by a group that included Salmān. Salmān told the others: 'Stand up and beseech that man. By God, no one but him can tell you your Prophet's secrets.'"

In his exegesis, Naqqāsh quotes Ibn ᶜAbbās as saying:

> ᶜAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib knew such knowledge that God's Messenger had taught him, and God had taught God's Messenger; so God's Messenger's knowledge is God's knowledge, Ali's knowledge is from the Prophet's knowledge, and my knowledge is from Ali's knowledge. My knowledge and Muhammad's companions' knowledge is nothing but a drop in seven seas.

ᶜAwnī says:

وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ وَعِلْمُ مَا يَكُونُ وَمَا قَدْ كَانَ عِلْمًا مُكَتَّمًا.[177]

"He who has all knowledge of the Book and knowledge of what was and what will be, hidden knowledge."

Abū Muqātil Ibn al-Dāʔ al-ʿAlawī says:

وَإِنَّ عِنْدَكَ عِلْمَ الْكَوْنِ أَجْمَعَهُ مَا كَانَ مِن سَالِفٍ مِنْهُ وَمَوْتَنَفِ.[178]

"Indeed you have the knowledge of all existence: of whatever is passed and whatever is yet to come."

Naṣr Ibn Muntaṣir says:

وَمَن حَوَى عِلْمَ الْكِتَابِ كُلَّهُ عِلْمَ الَّذِي يَأْتِي وَعِلْمَ مَا مَضَى

"And he who has all the knowledge of the Book, knowledge of what is yet to come and knowledge of what has passed."

The Master of the Faithful says:

ومنهايعنى آل محمد عليهم السلام، هُمْ مَوْضِعُ سِرِّهِ، وَلَجَأُ أَمْرِهِ، وَعَيْبَةُ عِلْمِهِ، وَمَوْئِلُ حُكْمِهِ، وَكُهُوفُ كُتُبِهِ، وَجِبَالُ دِينِهِ،

(And in [the same sermon] referring to Muhammad's Family), "They are the repository of His secret, the safe haven for His affair, the bag of His knowledge, the refuge of His rule, the caves of His Books, and the mountains of His religion."

He continues:

لَا يُقَاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ عليهم السلام مِن هَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ أَحَدٌ، وَلَا يُسَوَّى بِهِمْ مَن جَرَتْ نِعْمَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَبَداً. هُمْ أَسَاسُ الدِّينِ، وَعِمَادُ الْيَقِينِ، إِلَيْهِمْ يَفِيءُ الْغَالِي، وَبِهِمْ يَلْحَقُ التَّالِي، وَلَهُمْ خَصَائِصُ حَقِّ الْوِلَايَةِ، وَفِيهِمُ الْوَصِيَّةُ وَالْوِرَاثَةُ.[179]

"No one in this nation compares to Muhammad's Family. No one onto whom their blessing has flowed will ever be equal to them. They are the basis of the religion, the pillar of certainty. The frontrunner has to turn back to them, and the follower has to catch up with them. They have the characteristics of the right of guardianship, and the executorship and inheritance is in them."

Lessons Fifty-Four to Fifty-Six

Commentary on the Verse:
أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ...

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him, and before him was Moses' Book, an example (imāman) and a mercy? Those believe in it. Hell will be the meeting place for whoever disbelieves in it out of the factions, so do not be in any doubt about it; it is the Truth from your Lord, though most people do not believe. (11:17)

LESSONS FIFTY-FOUR TO FIFTY-SIX

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

Blessing upon Muhammad and his infallible Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ فَالنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُ ۚ فَلَا تَكُ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him, and before him was Moses' Book, an example (imāman) and a mercy? Those believe in it. Hell will be the meeting place for whoever disbelieves in it out of the factions, so do not be in any doubt about it; it is the Truth from your Lord, though most people do not believe. (11:17)

Commentary of the Verse *Is he then who has insight from his Lord*

In this auspicious verse, *he...who has insight* means the noble Prophet and *a witness of his [kind]* means the Master of the Faithful. There are many Sunni and Shi'a hadiths about this verse, more from the former than the latter.

The erudite traditionist Baḥrānī cites 23 Sunni hadiths and 11 Shi'a ones.[180]

Now, before beginning our discussion and explaining the hadiths, some exegesis of the verse is needed.

A Brief Overview of Sūrat Hūd

The verse appears in chapter 17—Hūd—which was revealed in Mecca. The chapter begins with:

الر ۚ كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ

'Alif, Lām, Rā. A Book, the verses of which were knitted together, then divided up, from One Wise, Informed.

It speaks of a Qur'an knitted together, and a Qur'an divided up, or in other words, the Qur'an was a single entity in the highest worlds, but in this world, it is divided into chapters, verses, rulings, fields of knowledge, and issues. The subsequent verses deal with inviting [people] to worship God, repentance to Him, and the [eschatological] return to Him. Verse 5 recounts the Qurayshī unbelievers' rejection of the invitation; the subsequent verses then inform us of God's Will, Self-Sufficiency, and role as Creator, the Resurrection, and people's being quickened after death. The verses also discuss the rejecters, the believers' persistence and rectitude, and others' fickleness, doubts, despair, ingratitude, pride, and inappropriate mirth.

We reach verses 12–14, which address the Prophet, saying:

> *Then, it may be that you will give up part of what is revealed to you and your breast will become straitened by it because they say: Why has not a treasure been sent down upon him or an angel come with him? You are only a warner; and God is custodian over all things. Or, do they say: He has forged it. Say: Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call upon whom you can besides God, if you are truthful. But if they do not answer you, then know that it is revealed by God's knowledge and that there is no god but He; will you then submit?* (11:12–14)

Then in the two subsequent verses He talks of the fruits of worldly people's labors, after which we encounter:

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind], follows him and before him was Moses' Book, an example and a mercy? Those believe in it. (11:17)

Given that the previous verses recount the polytheists' denial of the truthfulness of the Qur'an, this verse is linked to those verses, serving as evidence and proof of the need to believe in the Glorious Qur'an, and so the question is rhetorical.

The Meaning of بينة and شاهد

Here, we determine what

بَيِّنَة

means, and what

يَتْلُو

and

شَاهِدٌ

mean.

In some Qur'anic verses, the word

بَيِّنَة

means clear proof, for example:

ليهلك من هلك عن بينة

that he who would perish might perish by clear proof. (8:42)

Elsewhere it means sign and miracle, for example:

قد جاءتكم بينة من ربكم هذه ناقة الله لكم.

A sign from your Lord has come to you. This is God's she-camel... (7:73)

It sometimes means the insight and light given exclusively to the prophets, as per Noah's words:

يا قوم أرأيتم ان كنت على بينة من ربي وءاتاني رحمة من عنده

O my people! Tell me if I have with me insight from my Lord, and He has granted me mercy from Himself... (11:28)

However, sometimes

بَيِّنَةٍ

means Divine insight and inner light, as in the Exalted God's words:

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ كَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

Is he who has insight from his Lord like he to whom the evil of whose action has been beautified, and they have followed their own desires? (47:14)

This is what

بَيِّنَةٍ

means in the verse under discussion because it is also followed by the plural, as in:

اولئك يؤمنون به

Those believe in it.

Clearly not all believers have the insight exclusive to prophethood, and even though the person who has the

بَيِّنَةٍ

means God's Messenger, in accordance with the subject, because this part of the verse is a prelude to what follows, namely:

فلا تك في مرية منه

so do not be in any doubt about it,

بَيِّنَة

has to mean that unrestricted Divine insight effused by God upon His Noble Prophet, and not the Qur'an, because that would not be compatible with what follows, namely:

فلا تك في مرية منه

so do not be in any doubt about it.

From the above, the incorrectness of what some claim can be inferred, namely that *he who has insight* means the Prophet in particular, but intended generally, meaning that those referred to in the plural in *Those believe in it* also have insight from their Lord.

Similarly, the claim by some—that what is meant here is God's Messenger's companions—is not correct because the Prophet alone has insight. The verse applies to him exclusively, not generally. God means: You are he who has divine insight. The physical witness and the Book of Moses before you confirm you. You should believe in the Qur'an and not be troubled by the polytheists who asked you to bring a treasure down or for an angel to come. You have to proclaim and guide the people with a firm foot and will, not softness.

Equally incorrect is the claim by some that *bayyinah* means the Qur'an or rational proof, because this is an introduction to the Qur'an and the command to cling to it, that is, he who has insight and divine light believes in the Qur'an. You, Our Messenger, who has such insight, also do not have any doubt about the Qur'an.

It would make no sense for someone who already has the Qur'an to be commanded to believe it will come, and warned not to have any doubt it will!

As for rational proof, because the insight the Prophet has is stronger, it makes no sense to restrict the *bayyinah* subsisting in the Seal of the Prophet's being to rational proof.

يَتْلُو

means *follows*, not recites or recites rhythmically, because it is not correct to say that that witness recites the Prophet or recites the light of his insight. As we said, *bayyinah* does not mean the Qur'an, so it is not recitable.

Shāhid means someone actually giving evidence as opposed to someone merely being called as a witness, because merely calling a witness is not evidence against the polytheists. Rather, what is evidence against them supports the Prophet, and confirms his divine insight and divine light is someone who actually gives evidence. This is

because *witness* (*shāhid*) here means someone who swears to the truthfulness of the Prophet's message and to his message being supported by his insight, and believes in it. This is because the testimony of a person with certainty and insight dispels all doubt and allays all fear of being deserted and alone; people who are alone may become weak and hopeless when faced with difficulties. The opposite is true of those who receive the support of others—they always feel strong.

Here too, in response to the polytheists' attack and harsh criticism, God says [words to this effect]: "O Prophet, he who has divine insight and is supported by a physical witness believes in the Qur'an. He is never in any dilemma or any doubt. This witness, without any doubt, is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, who became a Muslim on the first day of prophecy and helped the Prophet bear the load of the message." He answered his call when God told him to warn his closest kinsmen:

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

And warn your closest kinsmen. (26:214)

According to the Clan Hadith, he alone stood up and became the Prophet's aide, supporter, and vizier. In light of the above, the verse applies exclusively to the Master of the Faithful, ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī's Explanation of Why the Witness Can Only Mean Imam Ali

Abu al-Futūḥ Rāzī presents a cogent argument that *witness* means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib exclusively and refutes any other possible explanation. He first presents the other possible interpretations of *witness*, then gently refutes them. We shall also present the alternative interpretations, then cite his refutation of them.

He says:

> No exegetes disagree that *he...who has insight* means God's Messenger. The only disagreement is over what *witness* means.
>
> ʿAbdullāh, ʿAlqamah, Ibrāhīm, Mujāhid, Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū al-ʿĀliyah, and ʿIkrimah say it means Gabriel. Hasan Baṣrī and Qatādah say it means God's Messenger's tongue.
>
> Some say it means his face, because whoever looks at his features and disposition acknowledges him as prophet and messenger.

Husayn Ibn Faḍl says *bayyinah* means the Qur'an. Its amazing coherence, dazzling style, and inimitability are the best evidence that he was a prophet.

Ibn Jurayj and Mujāhid say: The witness (*shāhid*) means the angel who protected, supported, and strengthened God's Messenger.

Another says: The witness means God's Messenger himself.[181]

Even though these possible interpretations and opinions are attributable to exegetes, they appear distorted and unpalatable, because they all contradict the apparent meaning of the verse.

ويتلوه شاهد منه

is made up of three words; the first is

يتلوه

which means "comes after"; the second is

شاهد

(*witness*), and the third is

منه

the pronominal suffix of which refers to God's Messenger who has the insight. When these three words are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that all the possible interpretations presented by the exegetes are wrong.

The claim that *shāhid* (a witness) means Gabriel or the angel put in charge of God's Messenger is completely incorrect because of the word

منه

(*minhu*). The angel or Gabriel does not belong to the same species as God's Messenger—they are angels and God's Messenger is human. The pronominal suffix in

منه

means that the witness belongs to the same species as God's Messenger.

To say that *shāhid* means the Qur'an is also wrong because of both the word

يتلوه

and the word

منه

because the Qur'an does not follow after the Prophet. Furthermore it is not of his species.

It is wrong to say it means God's Messenger's tongue because of the words

يتلوه

and

شاهد

because the tongue of the Prophet does not trail or follow him. Furthermore, a person's tongue is not a witness to the truth of his claim.

The claim that it means the Prophet himself is totally baseless, because it is inconsistent with the words

يتلوه شاهد

and

منه

because God's Messenger does not follow himself, is not a witness for himself, and is not [other than himself but] of his own species. Because all these possible interpretations and opinions are invalid, without any doubt *shāhid* (witness) has to mean the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, as narrated by both Shi'a and Sunnis on the authority of the Prophet. This is the only explanation that is compatible with all the words in the verse:

يتلوه شاهد

and

منه

because he was at God's Messenger's side, followed him, and was always a truthful witness to his being a prophet. Moreover, he belonged to the human race and was of God's Messenger's kind.

The verses with a meaning most similar to this one are verses 10–12 of Sūrat al-Aḥqāf:

قل أرءيتم ان كان من عند الله وكفرتم به وشهد شاهد من بنى اسرءيل على مثله فئامن واستكبرتم
ان الله لا يهدى القوم الظالمين وقال الذين كفروا للذين ءامنوا لو كان خيرا ما سبقونا اليه واذ لم
يهتدوا به فسيقولون هذا افك قديم ومن قبله كتب موسى اماما ورحمة وهذا كتب مصدق لسانا عربيا
لينذر الذين ظلموا وبشرى للمحسنين

Say, "Have you considered if it is from God, and you disbelieve in it, and a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like and believed, whereas you

are too proud?" Surely, God does not guide the wrongdoing people. And those who disbelieve say to those who believe: "If it were any good they would not have beaten us to it." And as they do not seek to be guided by it, they will say, "This is an ancient lie!" Before it, Moses' Book was an example and a mercy, and this is a Book which confirms it in the Arabic language, to warn those who do wrong and as good news for the good-doers. (46:10-12)

First of all, when these two sets of verses are considered and compared with each other, it becomes clear that they both refer to the Qur'an or to divine insight denied by the polytheists in a rhetorical question.

Secondly, the Torah refers to it as a Book of guidance and a mercy for the people. It was revealed before the Qur'an to pave the way for God's Book, the Glorious Qur'an. The Qur'an also confirms it. Furthermore, the Qur'an is not the first scripture to be rejected by the polytheists—they also rejected the Torah. The ethical, legal, and informative passages of the Qur'an are similar to the Torah's, and there is no excuse for them to reject it, as verse 9 says:

قُلْ مَا كُنتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ

Say, "I am not the first of the messengers." (46:9)

The Meaning of "Witness" in *a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like*

Thirdly, just as in the verse under consideration,

ويتلوه شاهد منه

means God's Messenger's executor, the Master of the Faithful, who corroborates God's Messenger's Prophethood and is a witness to his message, among the Israelites, Moses's executor, Joshua son of Nūn corroborated Moses 's Prophethood and was a witness to his message—he believed in Moses, as it says:

وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ

and a witness from among the Israelites testified to its like.[182]

It can be inferred from prophetic hadiths, which say that whatever happened to the previous nations will also happen to this nation—that Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's being a witness to God's Messenger's prophethood is identical to Moses's executor being a witness to Moses's prophethood.

Therefore, in comparing the verses in chapters 11 (Hūd) and 46 (al-Aḥqāf), it becomes clear that the Israelite witness to the Qur'an's equivalent at that time, the Torah, will have been equivalent to the

witness to the integrity of God's Messenger's prophecy, who was of his own kind. Good evidence in support of our claim is a hadith cited by Suyūṭī in his exegesis: Saʿīd Ibn Mansūr, Ibn Jarīr, and Ibn Mundhir quote Ibn Masrūq, may God be well pleased with him, as saying about the Exalted God's words:

وشهد شاهد من بنی اسرءیل علی مثله قال: موسی مثل محمد، والتوراة مثل القرآن فآمن هذا بکتابه ونبیه وکفرتم یااهل مکة.[183]

"Moses is like Muhammad and the Torah is like the Qurʾan; this [witness] believed in his Book and prophet, but you Meccans disbelieve!"

It is strange that most exegetes, including Shiʿa exegetes, interpret شاهد

in

وشهد شاهد من بنی اسرءیل علی مثله

as ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām—even Ṭabarsī,[184] Fayḍ Kāshānī,[185] and our great Master, ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī[186] say so.

Concerning this, Suyūṭī narrates that Abū Yaʿlā, Ibn Jarīr, Ṭabarānī, and Ḥākim quote ʿAwf Ibn Mālik Ashjaʿī as saying:

> The Holy Prophet set off and I was with him. We entered the Jewish synagogue on their holiday. They hated our visiting them. God's Messenger told them: "Show me 12 men among you to testify that
>
> لااله الاالله محمد رسول الله
>
> 'There is no god but God. Muhammad is God's Messenger.' God will stop being angry with every Jew under the copious heavens." They remained silent and none of them answered. He repeated [it] to them but no one answered; he said it a third time but no one answered.
>
> [The Prophet] said: "You have resistance, but by God, I am the gatherer, I am the successor, and I am the follower in footsteps whether you believe or disbelieve." He then turned away, me with him. We had almost left, when suddenly a man was behind him saying: "O Muhammad, so you are." He approached. The man then asked: "O ye Jews, what kind of a man do you know me to be among you?" They replied: "By God, we know no one among us to be more learned in God's Book, or have greater understanding than you, your father, or your grandfather."
>
> He then said: "Surely, I testify by God that he is the Prophet that you read about in the Torah and the Gospel."

They replied: "You have lied." They then answered him and uttered wickedness.

God's Messenger then said: "You lie. He will not accept what you say."

[ᶜAwf Ibn Mālik] says: The three of us, the Prophet, ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, and I, then left the synagogue and God revealed:

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِۦ فَـَٔامَنَ وَٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ

Say "Have you considered if it is from God, and you disbelieve in it, and a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like, and believed, whereas you are too proud?" Surely, God does not guide the wrongdoing people.[187]

However, as mentioned above, the *witness* in the verse can only mean an Israelite who testified to the Torah during Moses's time. That applies to Moses's executor, Joshua son of Nūn.

Refutation of the Claim that ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām Is the Witness Referred to in the Verse

This verse is not about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām for the following reasons:

Firstly, Sūrat al-Aḥqāf is Meccan, and ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim in Medina. It would have been futile for God's Messenger to call as a witness a man who had not yet become a Muslim, and was not present to corroborate his prophecy and to testify to his truthfulness, to counter the Qurayshī polytheists and rejecters.

Secondly, the blessed verse explicitly states that this was a witness to the like of the Qur'an, that is the Torah, not the Qur'an itself, and what value do unbelievers attach to the Torah? In contrast:

ويتلوه شاهد منه

tells us that the Master of the Faithful testified to [Muhammad's] Prophethood. The Israelite witness in Moses's time was a witness to [Moses's] prophethood or to the Torah and corroborated his prophetic mission.

Thirdly, ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim in Medina just after the Prophet's arrival there, not after he had settled down, so there could not have been a Jewish holiday. Ibn ᶜAbd al-Birr says in his biographical entry on ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām:

ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām Ibn al-Ḥārith, the Israelite, later Anṣarī. His teknonym was Abū Yusuf. He was of the offspring of Joseph son of Jacob.

He had made a pact with the Anṣār; it is said that he was also united with Qawāfilah [a group of Anṣār], who are from Banī ᶜAwf Ibn Khazraj. His pre-Islamic name was Ḥuṣayn (Little Horse) but the Prophet renamed him ᶜAbdullāh after he became a Muslim. He died in Medina in 43 AH, during Muᶜāwiyah's reign. He was a Rabbi. He became a Muslim when God's Messenger arrived in Medina.

ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām said:

> On the arrival of God's Messenger in Medina, a group of Medinans and I went to the outskirts of the town to look at him. I looked at him and pondered upon his face. I realized that his was not a liar's face. The first thing I heard him say was:
>
> ایها الناس افشوا السلام، واطعموا الطعام، وصلوا الارحام، وصلوا باللیل والناس نیام، تدخلوا الجنة
>
> "O people, spread peace, give food, maintain good relations with kin, and pray at night, when the people are asleep. You will go to Heaven."[188]

Fourthly: the context of the verse:

قل أرءیتم ان کان من عند الله وکفرتم به وشهد شاهد من بنی إسرءیل علی مثله

means that God's Messenger was not addressing the Israelites.

Fifthly: The Gospel is not Jewish scripture; the Jews have never believed in the Gospel. They tell lies, make inappropriate accusations about Mary, and call Jesus a bastard! Under those circumstances, how, according to this hadith, can ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām say to the Jews: "I call God as a witness that Muhammad is the same Prophet that you have read about in the Torah and Gospel..."?

We conclude from the above that this hadith is fabricated. Apart from this, there are Sunni hadiths that say that not a single verse was revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, or that say that this verse is not about him. Suyūṭī says:

> Ibn Mundhir cites a hadith from Shaᶜbī saying:
>
> ما نزل فی عبد الله بن سلام شیء من القرآن.[189]
>
> "None of the Qurʾan was revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām."

He also says:

> ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ḥamīd and Ibn Mundhir quote ᶜIkrimah as saying:

وشهد شاهد من بنی إسرءیل علی مثله، قال: لیس بعبد الله بن سلام، هذه الآیة مکیة فیقول من آمن من بنی اسرائیل کمن آمن بالنبی صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم.

"...*And a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like...* It is not ᶜAbdullah Ibn Salām. This verse is Meccan, so whichever Israelite believed is like whoever believed in the Prophet."[190]

Similarly, Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrate that Masrūq said:

قوله: وشهد شاهد من بنی اسرءیل علی مثله قال: والله ما نزلت فی عبد الله بن سلام، ما نزلت الا بمکة وانما کان اسلام ابن سلام بالمدینة، وانما کانت خصومة خاصم بها محمد صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم

"[Regarding] His words: *and a witness from among the Israelites has testified to its like*, by God, [the verse] was revealed nowhere else but Mecca. ᶜAbdullah Ibn Salām only became a Muslim in Medina. It was just a dispute Muhammad was involved in."[191]

In any case, the verse's having been revealed about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām is so unlikely that some have been forced to say that the verse is Meccan, but ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām became a Muslim in Medina, making it come true.

Suyūṭī says:

Hasan Ibn Muslim states that:

نزلت هذه الآیة بمکة وعبد الله بن سلام بالمدینة

"This verse was revealed in Mecca when ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām was in Medina."[192]

He also says: "Ibn Saᶜd and Ibn ᶜAsākir quote Hasan Baṣrī as saying:

نزلت حم وعبد الله بالمدینة مسلم.

'*Ḥā Mīm* was revealed when ᶜAbdullāh was [already] a Muslim in Medina.'"[193]

Neither hadith is correct, because as we said, at the time when Sūrat al-Aḥqāf was revealed, ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām had not yet become a Muslim. As we said in the exegesis of the verse

ومن عنده علم الکتب

only ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām, his son, and grandson say this verse is about them, but no one else does.

Because

ومن عنده علم الكتب

is about the Master of the Faithful, Shiᶜa scholars, may God be pleased with them, have exerted efforts to prove that it is not about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām. However, because

وشهد شاهد

is not about Imam Ali, they have not paid much attention to it, glossing over it briefly, to the point that some Sunnis claim that the Shiᶜa agree that the verse is about ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām. However, it is about Joshua Ibn Nūn, Moses's executor, and counterpart to Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, Muhammad's executor. The same principle applies to

ومن عنده علم الكتب

as to

شهد شاهد

as regards whether they can apply to ᶜAbdullah Ibn Salām or not. Both verses are Meccan. If one can, then so can the other, but if one cannot, then neither can the other.

Moreover, what is ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām's value, considered as he is by some to be of unknown status, along with his not pledging allegiance to Ali after Othman's death, such that God's Messenger should give weight to his testimony, to counter the polytheists, linking him to his prophecy and to the Torah, which contains mercy and guidance?!

In any event this discussion of:

وشهد شاهد من بني اسرءيل على مثله

was a digression, and we should return to the matter at hand—discussion of:

ويتلوه شاهد منه

Hadiths from Ibn ᶜAbbās That Say That Imam Ali Is the Witness

There are many Shiᶜa and Sunni hadiths, with various wordings, which say that this verse is about the Master of the Faithful, and we shall cite some of them.

Firstly there are some hadiths narrated by Ibn ᶜAbbās. Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Khārazmī says:

افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه قال ابن عباس: هو علي يشهد للنبي وهو منه.[194]

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him.

Ibn ᶜAbbās says: "It [means] Ali, testifying for the Prophet. He is of his kind (*minhu*)."

ᶜAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī quotes this hadith from *Tafsīr al-Burhān* on the authority of Khārazmī.[195]

Moreover, Ibrāhīm Ibn Muhammad Ḥamwīnī, who is a Sunni scholar, narrates via his chain of transmission from Ibn ᶜAbbās in *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn*:

افمن كان على بينة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم ويتلوه شاهد منه على عليه السلام خاصة

"Is he then who has insight [means] God's Messenger—*and a witness of his [kind]* [means] Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib exclusively."

Ḥākim cites the same hadith; Thaᶜlabī also includes it in his exegesis, with the same wording, on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās. ᶜAllāmah Amīnī cites it on the authority of Thaᶜlabī, and Ali Ibn ᶜĪsā Irbilī cites it in *Kashf al-Ghummah* on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās.[196]

The second set are hadiths narrated by Anas Ibn Mālik. Ḥammād Ibn Salamah quotes Thābit as saying that Anas said:

افمن كان على بينة من ربه؟

هو رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم «ويتلوه شاهد منه» هو علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام، كان والله لسان رسول الله.[197]

"Is he then who has insight from his Lord [means] God's Messenger

ويتلوه شاهد منه

and a witness from his kind [means] Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. By God, he was God's Messenger's tongue."

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, via his own unbroken chain of transmission, also narrates this hadith from Anas, but with an addition to the end:

كان والله لسان رسول الله الى اهل مكة في نقض عهدهم مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم.[198]

"By God, he was God's Messenger's tongue to the Meccans with regard to the breach of their covenant with God's Messenger."

From the Prophet and the Imams

The third set are prophetic hadiths. Ibn Maghāzilī Shāfiʿī says:

قوله تعالى: افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه قال رسول الله: انا على بينة من ربه وعلي الشاهد.[199]

"[With regard to] God's words: *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...?* God's Messenger said: 'I have insight from [my] Lord and Ali is the witness.'"

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates this prophetic hadith via two chains of transmission: one from Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Mufid[200] and the other from Ibn ʿAbbās.[201] Suyūṭī also cites it, albeit worded slightly differently.[202]

The fourth set are hadiths narrated from Imam Muhammad Bāqir. Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm, via his chain of transmission from Abū Baṣīr and Fuḍayl, narrates:

عن ابی جعفر علیه السلام قال: انما نزلت: افمن کان علی بینة من ربه یعنی رسول الله صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم ویتلوه شاهد منه، اماما ورحمة.[203]

"Abu Jaʿfar [Imam Bāqir] said: 'It was revealed as *Is he who has insight from his Lord*, meaning God's Messenger, and a witness—an Imam and a mercy—of his own kind follows him.'"

Being described as an Imam and a mercy are particular to Ali, not the Torah, but [words] were moved forwards and backwards so that the Torah would be described [as such].

Fifth is the hadith on the authority of Imam Mūsā Ibn Jaʿfar: Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī narrates via an unbroken chain from Ahmad Ibn Omar Ḥallal, quoting him as saying:

سألت ابا الحسن علیه السلام عن قول الله عز وجل: افمن کان علی بینة من ربه ویتلوه شاهد منه فقال: امیر المؤمنین علیه السلام الشاهد من رسول الله علی بینة من ربه.

"I asked Abu al-Hasan [Mūsā Ibn Jaʿfar] about the Mighty and Sublime God's words, *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his own kind follows him*, and he answered: 'Ali was the witness, of the [same] kind [as] God's Messenger, who had insight from his Lord.'"

Sixth is the hadith related by Saʿd Ibn ʿUbādah. Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī Kūfī says:[204]

> I am relating this hadith from Qays Ibn Saʿd Ibn ʿUbādah concerning a dispute between him and Muʿāwiyah.
>
> Qays said:
>
> > God's Messenger was taken at the Anṣār gathered before Abū Bakr and asked him: "Are you pledging allegiance to Saʿd [Ibn ʿUbādah]?" The Quraysh then disputed with evidence in support of

Ali and his Household and disputed with us on the basis of his right and close relationship. It was not long before the Quraysh had wronged the Anṣār and Muhammad's family. I swear on my life that none of the Anṣār, none of the Quraysh, none of the Arabs or the non-Arabs has any right to the Caliphate or any share with Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib and his offspring after him.

Thereupon, Muʿāwiyah became furious and said: "Ibn Saʿd, from whom have you learned this, and from whom do you narrate it? From whom did you hear it? Did your father tell it to you and did you learn it from him?"

[Qays] said: "I heard it from someone who is better than and has more right than my father."

Muʿāwiyah asked: "Who is he?"

[Qays] answered: "Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

اخذته من عالم هذه الامة وربانيها وصديقها وفاروقها الذى انزل الله فيه ما انزل: قل كفى بالله شهيدا بينى وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتب فلم تكن آية نزلت فيه الا ذكرها.

"I learned it from this nation's scholar, devoted worshipper (*rabbāni*) and righteous differentiator about whom God revealed: *Say, 'God and whoever has all the knowledge of the Book suffice as a Witness between me and you.'*" There was not a single verse revealed about him that [Qays] did not mention.

Muʿāwiyah said: "But [this nation's] righteous one and differentiator is Omar; and he who has all the knowledge of the Book is ʿAbdullāh Ibn Salām."

[Qays] said:

> More deserving and worthier of these things is he about whom God revealed:

افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه الذى انزل الله فيه: انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد والذى نصبه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم يوم غدير خم فقال: من كنت اولى به من نفسه فعلى اولى به من نفسه وقال فى غزوة تبوك: انت منى بمنزلة هارون من موسى الا انه لا نبى بعدى.[205]

> *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his kind follows him...?* about whom God revealed: "*You are just a warner and every nation has a guide,*" and whom God's Messenger appointed on the day of Ghadīr Khumm saying: "Over whomsoever I have more authority than he has over his own self, so too does Ali have more authority over [that person] than [that person] has over his own self." He said at the Battle of Tabūk: "You are to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me."

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ's Letter to Muᶜāwiyah Concerning Ali's Virtues

Seventh is ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ's letter to Muᶜāwiyah citing the revelation of this verse about Ali. That was when Muᶜāwiyah wrote to ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ, who was in Palestine, inviting him to help him fight Ali. ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ wrote in reply:

> From ᶜAmr Ibn Saᶜd Ibn Abī al-ᶜĀṣ[206] to Muᶜāwiyah Ibn Abī Sufyān: Now then, your letter reached me and I have read and understood it. As for what you have invited me to—ripping the noose of Islam from my neck, straying in error with your desire, helping you do wrong, and drawing my sword in the face of Ali, God's Messenger's brother, executor, heir, and repayer of God's Messenger's debt, fulfiller of his promise, husband to his daughter, Heaven's chief lady, father to his two grandsons, Hasan and Husayn, the people of Heaven's chief youths—[that will never be].
>
> And as for what you have said about being Othman's successor, you have spoken the truth. However, your dismissal from succession to him has become apparent today, allegiance has been pledged to someone else, and your succession has lapsed.
>
> As for what you have aggrandized me with and attributed to me—being one of God's Messenger's companions, and commander of his army—I am not deluded by commendation and will not leave my religion because of it.
>
> As for the reneging and envy of Othman you have attributed to Abū al-Hasan, God's Messenger's brother and executor, your calling his companions sinners and claiming that he incited them to kill him, it is a lie and error. Woe on you, Muᶜāwiyah! Do you not know that Abū al-Hasan exerted himself [fighting] for God's Messenger, slept on his bed, and was the first of the first to become a Muslim and migrant? God's Messenger said about him: "You are to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me."

On the day of Ghadīr Khumm he said: "Lo! Whoever's master I am, so too is Ali his master. O God, be a Guardian to whoever accepts him as master and an enemy to whoever is an enemy to him. Support whoever supports him and forsake whoever forsakes him."

He it is about whom God's Messenger said at the Battle of Khaybar: "Tomorrow, I will give the banner to a man who loves God and His Messenger, and whom God and His Messenger love."

It was about him that [God's Messenger] said on the Day of the [Roasted] Bird: "O God, bring me your most beloved creature." When Ali entered he said: "And mine, and mine." He said at the Battle against the Banī Naḍīr: "Ali is the Imam of the pious and the killer of sinners; whoever supports him will be supported, and whoever forsakes him will be forsaken." He also said about him: "Ali will be your Master after me." He confirmed these words to you, and all the Muslims, and said: "I am leaving among you two precious things: God's Book and my close family." He also said: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate."

Muᶜāwiyah, you know how many recited verses the Exalted God revealed about his virtues, unshared by any other, such as the Exalted God's words:

يوفون بالنذر، انما وليكم الله ورسوله والذين ءامنوا الذين يقيمون الصلوة ويؤتون الزكوة وهم راكعون، افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه ومن قبله كتب موسى، رجال صدقوا ما عاهدوا الله عليه، قل لا اسئلكم عليه اجرا الا المودة فى القربى.

They fulfil the vow (76:7); *Your guardian can only be God, His Messenger and those who believe, who establish prayer, and give charity while bowing* (5:55); *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him and before him was Moses' Book...?* (11:17); *...men who are true to the covenant which they made with God* (33:23); *Say, "I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for [my] close relations."* (42:23)

God's Messenger said: "Are you not content to be to me as Aaron was to Moses? Your peace is my peace, and your war is my war; you will be my brother and next of kin in this world and the Hereafter. Abū al-Hasan, whoever loves you loves me, and whoever hates you hates me. God will send whoever loves you to Heaven, and God will send whoever hates you to Hell."

Muᶜāwiyah, no one with any sense or faith (*dīn*) would be fooled by your letter, to which this is the reply. Peace![207]

It is clear that ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ's motive for writing this letter was not sincerity regarding and love for the Master of the Faithful. Even though he acknowledged and accepted the Master of the Faithful's virtues, he only did so to reject Muᶜāwiyah, who was trying to deceive him. Muᶜāwiyah did eventually manage to entice him by promising him the governorship of Egypt. No matter how much ᶜAmr's son, ᶜAbdullāh, and servant, Wardān, advised him, he did not care what they were trying to tell him. After a protracted discussion between him and Muᶜāwiyah, the governorship of Egypt was eventually given to him with only one condition: to fight and defeat the Master of the Faithful.[208]

At the Battle of Ṣiffīn, he was given the rank of Muᶜāwiyah's military advisor in the army.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd has a detailed biographical note on ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ in his commentary on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 83. The following is an abridged version. He says:

> His father was ᶜĀṣ Ibn Wā'il
>
> احد المستهزئين برسول الله والمكاشفين له بالعداوة
>
> one of those who mocked God's Messenger, and showed his enmity towards him. He annoyed God's Messenger, and the verse
>
> انا كفيناك المستهزئين
>
> *Surely We will suffice you against the scoffers* (15:95) was revealed about him.
>
> In Islam, he is called "bobtailed" (*abtar*), a metaphor for being deprived of offspring, because he used to say about God's Messenger: "This bobtailed one will die tomorrow and memory of him will be cut off." However,
>
> ان شانئك هو الأبتر
>
> *For he who hates you will be without posterity* (108:3) was revealed.

ᶜAmr's Misdeeds and His Enmity to the Prophet

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ also used to hurt and vilify the Prophet of God in Mecca. At night, when the Holy Prophet used to go to the Kaᶜbah to worship, he would place pebbles everywhere on the road to block his way and make him slip. He was one of the people who prevented the Prophet's daughter Zaynab from leaving Mecca to migrate to Medina. They frightened Zaynab and struck her camel litter with spear butts, causing her to miscarry her child by her husband, Abu al-ᶜĀṣ Ibn al-

Rabīᶜ. When the news reached God's Messenger, he was so angry that he cursed them.

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ used to teach derisory poems to the young children in Mecca, and they would sing them out loud when the Prophet passed them by. He himself would compose and sing derisory poems about God's Messenger. When the Prophet stood to pray at Ḥijr Ismāʿīl, he would also sing his poems aloud. That was why the Prophet of God implored:

اللهم أن عمرو بن العاص هجاني ولست بشاعر فالعنه بعدد ما هجاني.[209]

"O God, surely ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ is ridiculing me. I am not a poet, so curse him as many times as he ridicules me."

Sulaym Ibn Qays says: "The Master of the Faithful said that he had composed an ode comprised of 70 couplets mocking the Prophet of God. The Prophet implored: "O God, curse him for every couplet."[210]

Hadith narrators say that Naṣr Ibn Ḥārith, and ᶜUqbah Ibn Abī Muᶜayṭ and ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ had taken the womb of a slaughtered young camel and while the Prophet was prostrating in his prayer around the Kaᶜbah they put it on his head. The Prophet remained silent. He did not raise his head, but cried and cursed them in his prostration.

His daughter Fāṭimah came to him, crying, took that dirty womb off her father's head, threw it away, and sat crying by her father until the Prophet of God lifted his head up from prostration and implored three times:

اللهم عليك بقريش

"O God, repel the evil of the Quraysh!"

Then he implored out loud three times:

انى مظلوم فانتصر

"I am oppressed, so help [me]." He then stood up and went home.

This event took place two months after his uncle Abū Ṭālib's death.[211] Because of his extreme enmity towards God's Messenger, the Meccans sent ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ as their delegate to the Negus, the King of Abyssinia, to put him off Islam, so he would expel the Meccan migrants from Abyssinia and above all, behead Jaᶜfar Ibn Abī Ṭālib.[212]

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ's mother Salmā was nicknamed Nābighah (genius) and was the slave of a man from the clan of ᶜAnzah when she was captured. ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Judᶜān Taymī purchased her in Mecca, but because she was a whore, he freed her.

Five men—Abū Sufyān Ibn Ḥarb, ᶜĀṣ Ibn Wāʾil Sahmī, Abū Lahab Ibn ᶜAbd al-Muṭṭalib, Umayyad Ibn Khalaf, and Hishām Ibn

Mughīrah Makhzūmī—had intercourse with her during a single interval between menses, and she subsequently gave birth to ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ. Then, each of them claimed the child as his own, saying: "We will ask his mother, Salmā, to choose his father." She said: "It is ᶜĀṣ's," because he had given her more money, and Abū Sufyān had been miserly, even though ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ most resembled Abū Sufyān. Nevertheless, Salmā said he was ᶜĀṣ's and not Abū Sufyān's.[213]

Thus, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ showed his enmity towards God's Messenger until the Battle of Khandaq when the unbelievers returned to Mecca.

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ says:

> I gathered together the men who shared my views and listened to me, and told them:
>
> > I see Muhammad rising horrifically above everyone else; I think we should migrate to Abyssinia and start living under the Negus's protection. Then, when Muhammad becomes victorious and defeats the Meccans, we will be better off with the Negus than under Muhammad's command. However, if the people of our township defeat Muhammad, then we are those whom they have known (and nothing but good will come to us from them). This is my opinion.

The people approved ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ's plan and left town heading towards Abyssinia, taking many presents with them.

ᶜAmr Defames the Prophet's Delegate to the Negus

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ says: "After arriving in Abyssinia and delivering the gifts and presents, we were in the Negus's court when God's Messenger's envoys, ᶜAmr Ibn Umayyah, Jaᶜfar Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and his companions, arrived."

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ says:

> I told my friends, "The time has come for me to take my revenge on Muhammad. This is ᶜAmr Ibn Umayyah. What if I go and see the Negus, ask him for him, and then behead him?" I then went to see [the Negus], prostrated before him, and after greeting and saluting him, said: "O King! I have seen a man leave your presence who is the envoy of a man who is an enemy to you, so give him to me to kill. He has struck our nobles and great men!"

Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ says:

The Negus became so angry that he punched himself so hard on the face that I thought he had broken his own nose. If the earth had split open for me, I would have entered it to get away from him! I said: "O King! I gather that you hate that [idea]." The Negus replied: "Are you asking me to give you the envoy of a man to whom the Archangel [Gabriel] comes as he did to Moses?" I asked: "Is he really so?"

He said: "By God, yes. Obey me and follow him. O man, woe to you. [Muhammad] is right and will defeat everyone who opposes him—just as Moses defeated Pharaoh and his minions." I said: "Then, pledge allegiance for me to him [on the basis of] Islam." He then stretched out his hand, and I pledged allegiance to him on the basis of Islam."

I set off towards God's Messenger. When I arrived in Medina, I went to God's Messenger, Khālid Ibn Walīd, who had accompanied me on the journey to him, and became a Muslim. I then said: "God's Messenger, I pledge allegiance to you on condition that you forgive me all my early sins," without mentioning the later ones.

He replied:

بايع يا عمرو، فان الاسلام يجب ما قبله وان الهجرة تجب ما قبلها.

"O ʿAmr, pledge allegiance, because Islam expiates everything that precedes it, and migration [also] expiates everything that precedes it."

So I pledged allegiance to him and became a Muslim.[214]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Birr says: "ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ became a Muslim in 8 AH (628 CE). He came to Medina with Khālid Ibn Walīd and Othman Ibn Ṭalḥah, and when the Prophet of God saw them, he said to them:

رَمَتْكُمْ مَكَّةُ بِأَفْلاذِ كَبِدِهَا.[215]

"Mecca has expelled you, its own children!"

In this hadith, it becomes quite clear that ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ did not become a Muslim sincerely or with good intentions. However, after realizing how many crimes he had committed, and when confronted by the Negus's rejection, and when the latter invited him to become a Muslim, he realized he had no choice but to pledge allegiance and become a Muslim to protect his worldly interests.

God's Messenger sent him with 300 men to Dhāt al-Salāsil, one of the cities of Quḍāʿah, to invite the people to Islam (because his grandmother, the mother of ʿĀṣ Ibn Wāʾil, was from the Balī tribe, the Prophet sent him there, to Balī and ʿUdhrah territory).

On the way there, he asked the Prophet for more help, so the Holy Prophet sent him 200 more men, under the command of ʿUbaydah, to help him.

Later on, God's Messenger appointed him as governor of Oman, and he remained in that position until God's Messenger's death.

After Yazīd Ibn Abī Sufyān died, Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb appointed ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ as governor of Palestine and Jordan, Muʿāwiyah as governor of Damascus, and Baʿalbak and Balqāʾ and Saʿīd Ibn ʿĀmir as governors of Ḥimṣ. Then, he entrusted Muʿāwiyah with all those places. He then wrote a letter to ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ instructing him to go to Egypt. He did so, fought and conquered it, and took the governorship of Egypt for himself until Omar was killed and Othman took control. Othman also let him govern Egypt for four years, and then dismissed him and sent ʿAbdullāh Ibn Saʿd Ibn Abī Sarḥ ʿĀmirī to govern Egypt.

Muʿāwiyah's Letter to ʿAmr

Ibn ʿAbd al-Birr says: "At the time of his governorship, ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ claimed that the people of Alexandria had breached their covenant, so he attacked, killing their soldiers and capturing their wives and children."

Othman could not believe that the Alexandrians had breached their covenant, so he ordered that the captives be sent home. He then appointed ʿAbdullāh Ibn Saʿd Ibn Abī Sarḥ as governor of Egypt. It was the start of the enmity and sedition between Othman and ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ, which caused ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ to be dismissed and settle in a district in Palestine. It was so until after Othman was killed, and the Migrants and Helpers pledged allegiance to Ali and Muʿāwiyah rebelled, demanding the governorship of the Levant.

The Imam refused, so Muʿāwiyah wrote to ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ in Palestine asking him to help fight against Ali.

It was the same letter and reply cited above.

After his reply reached Muʿāwiyah, the latter wrote another letter promising him the governorships of many towns and enormous amounts of money, and he wrote the following three couplets at the end:

جَهِلْتَ وَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ مَحَلَّكَ عِنْدَنَا وَأَرْسَلْتَ شَيْئاً مِنْ عِتَابٍ وَمَا تَدْرِي
فَثِقْ بِالَّذِي عِنْدِي لَكَ الْيَوْمَ آنِفاً مِنَ الْعِزِّ وَالْإِكْرَامِ وَالْجَاهِ وَالْقَدْرِ
فَأَكْتُبُ عَهْداً تَرْتَضِيهِ مُؤَكَّداً وَأُشْفِعُهُ بِالْبَذْلِ مِنِّي وَبِالْبِرِّ[216]

You have been ignorant and not realized your position with us, and sent some criticism without knowing;
So trust, today, my aforementioned esteem, respect, status and appreciation for you.
So I write a covenant which you will surely be pleased with, and I will add to it money and kindness.

ᶜAmr's Reply to Muᶜāwiyah

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ answered Muᶜāwiyah's letter as follows:

أبَى القَلْبُ مِنِّى أن اخادِعَ بِالمَكْرِ
بِقَتْلِ ابنِ عَفّانٍ أجُرُّ إلَى الكُفْرِ
وَإنِّى لَعَمرُو ذُو دَهاءٍ وَفِطْنَة
وَلَسْتُ أبِيعُ الدِّينَ بِالرِّبحِ والوَفْرِ
فَلَوْ كُنتَ ذَا رَأيٍ وَعَقْلٍ وَحِيلَة
لَقُلْتَ لِهَذا الشَّيْخِ إن خاضَ فِى الامْرِ
تَحِيَّة مَنشُورٍ جَلِيسٍ مُكَرَّم
بِمَخْطٍ (بِخَطٍّ) صَحِيحٍ ذى بَيَانٍ عَلى مِصْرِ
أَلَيْسَ صَغِيراً مُلْكُ مِصْرَ بِبَيْعَة
هِىَ العارُ فِى الدُّنيا عَلى العَقِبِ مِن عَمْرِو
فَإن كُنتَ ذا مَيلٍ شَدِيدٍ إلَى العُلى
وَامْرَةَ أهْلِ الدِّينِ مِثْلَ أبِى بَكْرِ
فَأشْرِكْ أخا رَأيٍ وَحَزْمٍ وَحِيلَة
مُعَاوِيَ فى أمْرٍ جَلِيلٍ لِذِى الذِّكْرِ
فَإنَّ رِواءَ اللَّيْثِ صَعْبٌ عَلَى الوَرَى
وَإن غابَ عَمْرٌو زِدْتَ شَرّاً إلَى شَرّ[217]

My heart resists my being deceived by the conspiracy of Othman's murder, [and] being led towards disbelief.
I am ᶜAmr, smart and clever, and I would not sell religion for profit or gain.

If you had wisdom, judgment, and wile, you would, instead of ruining him, invite this great man and give him the manifest written document of governing Egypt; and by doing so, you would respect him and make him your own companion.

Is the governorship of Egypt not very little in exchange for a pledge of allegiance that is a disgrace for ᶜAmr's children?

So, Muᶜāwiyah, if you are interested in high position and governing, do as Abū Bakr did among the people; do not beguile a man of high opinion and plan to take part in your trick.

Because it is not possible for all people to tie up a fierce lion on all fours, so if ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ is driven back, evil will settle upon the evil.

Here, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ says: "In short, if you choose a clever man like me, who has plenty of tricks and plans, as a partner to you, we can tie up the hands of Ali, who is the bravest man among all being. Otherwise you alone cannot do anything. You can do nothing but add evil to the other evils."

After reading his letter, Muᶜāwiyah wrote him a letter appointing him governor of Egypt.

ᶜAmr's Son and Servant Both Tell Him Not to Help Muᶜāwiyah

When ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ received the letter, he wondered what to do. First, he consulted his two sons, ᶜAbdullāh and Muhammad. ᶜAbdullāh told him not to go to Muᶜāwiyah, and said: "You are not appointed caliph, and will be no more than a courtier to Muᶜāwiyah for his worldly gain. You are both almost doomed and equally punishable."

However, Muhammad said: "You are the chief of the Quraysh, charged with their affairs. If the caliphate slips away unbeknownst to you, you will be contemptible. The people of the Levant are in the right, seeking revenge for Othman. The Umayyads will do so."

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ said: "O ᶜAbdullāh, you told me to do what is best for my religion, and you, Muhammad, have told me to do what is best for my worldly gain, so, I'll see."

When night fell and the world fell into darkness, he began reciting this poem so loudly that everyone could hear it.

تَطَاوَلَ لَيْلَى بِالْهُمُومِ الطَّوَارِقِ وَخَوْفِ الَّتِي تَجْلُو وُجُوهَ الْعَوَاتِقِ

وَإِنَّ ابْنَ هِنْدٍ سَائِلِي أَنْ أَزُورَهُ وَتِلْكَ الَّتِي فِيهَا بَيَاتُ الْبَوَائِقِ

أَتَاهُ جَرِيرٌ مِنْ عَلِيٍّ بِخُطَّةٍ أَمَرَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الْعَيْشَ ذَاتَ مَضَايِقِ

فان نال منّي ما يؤمّلُ ردّه وان لم ينله ذلّ ذُلّ المطابق
فَوَاللهِ مَا أدري وَمَا كُنتُ هَكذا أكُونُ وَمهما قادَني فَهُوَ سابِق
اخادِعُهُ إنّ الخِداعَ دَنِيّة ام أُعطيهِ مِن نَفسي نَصيحَة وَامِق
ام أقصُدُ فِي بَيتِي وَفِي ذَاكَ رَاحَة لِشَيخٍ يَخافُ المَوتَ فِي كُلّ سَارِقِ
وَقَد قَالَ عَبدُ اللهِ قَولًا تَعلّقَت بِهِ النَّفسُ إن لَم تَقتَطِعني عَوائِقِي
وَخَالَفَهُ فِيهِ اخُوهُ مُحَمّدٌ وَانّي لِصُلبِ الرّودِ عِندَ الحَقائِقِ [218]

[Interpretative translation]

Tonight has become lengthy to me, the unpleasant thoughts have surrounded me and dragged me down into the abyss. The fright of those combats that unveiled the chaste girls exposing them to the shameless seers upsets me.

[Muʿāwiyah], the son of Hind, has asked me to go to Damascus to visit him; I know that this meeting will end the outbreak of the fatal features and severe agonies.

Jarīr [Ibn ʿAbdillāh Bajalī] has come from Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib—from Kūfa to the Levant—and brought me a message pointing out Muʿāwiyah's problems that have made his life bitter.

If by my assistance, Muʿāwiyah fulfils his wish, he gets the caliphate; but if he does not get it, he will still carry on to reign with his own broken wings.

By God, I wonder what to do; I have never been in such a state before; if Muʿāwiyah succeeds in his pursuit, he will advance over me. Now, should I deceive him? Deceiving is mean and ugly. Should I deal kindly with him? Whatever he has asked me to do, I do it sincerely.

Or shall I sit in my home peacefully, and in this old age, in which death constantly threatens me, live in peace?

My son ʿAbdullāh has advised me in such a way that my soul is desirous of it. If there is no hurdle in my way I have to carry it out.

However, his brother, Muhammad, disagreed with him and led me in another direction. In any case, I am determined in my decision.

The night came to an end, and in the morning he wanted to consult his servant, Wardān, who was very clever, but before he could say anything, Wardān said: "If you me want to, I can tell you what is in your heart." ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ said: "Tell me." Wardān said: "This world and the Hereafter are battling inside you. One moment you think: 'Standing by Ali's side brings me the Hereafter but not this world, but being with Muʿāwiyah gives me this world but not the Hereafter.' So you are in a dilemma! One moment you wish to have this world, and the next, you wish for the Hereafter."

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ said: "May God fight you! How do you know what is going on in my heart? Now, let me know what is good for me to do."

Wardān said: "If I were you, I would sit in the corner of my room and wait; then, if the religious people succeed, I would follow them, but if the worldly men succeed, they will surely need your help."[219]

However, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ set out for his destination while saying:

يَا قَاتَلَ اللهُ وَرْداناً وَمِدْحَتَهُ أَبْدى لَعَمْرُكَ مَافِي النَّفسِ وَرْدانُ
لَمَّا تَعَرَّضَتْ الدُّنيا عَرَضْتُ لَهَا بِحِرصِ نَفسِي وَفِي الاطماعِ اذهانُ
نَفسٌ تَعِفُّ وَاخرى الحِرْصُ يَعلِبُهَا وَالمَرءُ يَأْكُلُ تِبْناً وَهُوَ غَرْثانُ
امّا عَلِيٌّ فَدِينٌ لَيسَ يَشْرَكُهُ دُنيا وَذاكَ لَهُ دُنيا وَسُلْطانُ
فَاخْتَرْتُ مِن طَمَعِي دُنيا عَلَى بَصَرٍ وَمَا مَعِي بِالَّذى اختارُ بُرْهانُ
إِنِّي لأَعْرِفُ مَافِيها وَابصِرُهُ وَفِي أَيضاً لِمَا أهواهُ الوانُ
لَكِنَّ نَفسِي تُحِبُّ العَيشَ فِي شَرَفٍ وَلَيسَ يَرضَى بِذُلِّ العَيشِ إِنسانُ.[220]

May God do away with Wardān
Who is aware of everything that goes on within me,
When the world came to me—and it always did—
I gladly received it through my greed.
One will (*nafs*) abstains, and the other is overcome with greed
Man eats straw when hungry!
Ali is religion not partnered by worldly
Gain. The other has worldly gain and power.
Because of my greediness, I have chosen worldly gain. I have no excuse for my choice.
I know and see the problem with it and many kinds of desires within me!
However, my soul loves living in dignity
And no man is content to live in degradation!

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ traveled on until he reached a crossroads: one road led to Iraq and the other to the Levant. ᶜAbdullāh and Wardān tried to stop him from taking the road to the Levant and said: "The road to Iraq brings you the ultimate success." However, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ did not listen to them and chose the road to the Levant.[221]

He went straight to Muᶜāwiyah, and the governorship of Egypt became his. In the meantime, he advised Muᶜāwiyah that the only way

to trick the people was to call for vengeance for Othman, God's Messenger's caliph—they must pretend that Ali and his companions had killed Othman.

They called for Sharḥabīl Ibn Simṭ, who was the shaykh and commander of the Levant, and Muᶜāwiyah and his companions insinuated to him that Ali had killed Othman, and that they should now fight Ali to avenge the wronged caliph. The poor man was tricked and announced to all the people that they should follow Muᶜāwiyah and spare no effort in avenging Othman. The end result was the Battle of Ṣiffīn.

It is related that 100,000 people died in this battle alone, before Laylat al-Harīr (The Night of the Howling), when victory for Ali was certain. The following day, he would have been able to defeat Muᶜāwiyah in a few hours, but ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ devised a new trick. He raised copies of the Qur'an on the tips of spears, sowing doubt among the Master of the Faithful's army, and they weakened. The hypocrites then forced Ali to surrender to two arbitrators.

ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ, who was the arbitrator for the Levantines, deceived Abū Mūsā Ashᶜarī into deposing Ali from the caliphate. The Khārijites eventually deserted the Imam's army and formed a separate group. The Imam did not acknowledge the arbitration, considering it to be a trick. He prepared to fight the Levantines again to topple Muᶜāwiyah's corrupt government.

When he had prepared a hundred soldiers to put an end to the whole affair, Ibn Muljam Murādī, who was a Khārijite, struck him on the head, and so the Imam left this exhausting world to live with his Lord where there is safety, peace, and bliss.

During the Master of the Faithful's caliphate, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ went to Egypt and killed Muhammad Ibn Abī Bakr, the Master of the Faithful's governor, and then did all he could to expand the area he ruled. He did not hide his enmity for the Household right up until the end of his life. Once he slandered Imam Hasan at Muᶜāwiyah's court.[222] He also reproached ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Jaᶜfar.[223]

Imam Hasan and ᶜAbdullāh gave an adequate response and exposed his evil deeds to the gathering.

The point of this biographical note on Amr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ is to show that firstly his belief in Islam was superficial, not heartfelt. Therefore, as soon as the world changed for his benefit, he sold his religion for the governorship of Egypt. Secondly, ᶜAmr Ibn al-ᶜĀṣ, who was the Master of the Faithful's enemy, initially acknowledged the Imam's vir-

tues and achievements and pointed them out in his letter to Muᶜāwiyah. He cited almost 20 of his virtues, all of which are corroborated elsewhere by authentic hadiths:

والفضلُ ما شهدت به الاعداءُ.

Virtue is what enemies attest to.

Another concession was with regard to the verse under discussion:

افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...? (11:17) which he explicitly stated was revealed about Imam Ali.

Hadiths from Imam Sajjād and Imam Hasan

Eighth is a hadith related by Imam Sajjād, Zayn al-ᶜĀbidīn.

Via his chain of transmission, Ibn al-Maghāzilī quotes ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh as saying:

قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ عَلِيّاً عليه السلام يَقُولُ فِي خُطْبَتِهِ: مَا نَزَلَتْ آيَةٌ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ مَتَى أُنْزِلَتْ وَفِيمَنْ أُنْزِلَتْ، وَمَا مِنْ قُرَشِيٍّ رَجُلٌ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أُنْزِلَتْ فِيهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ تَسُوقُهُ إِلَى جَنَّةٍ أَوْ نَارٍ. قَالَ رَجُلٌ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَمَا نَزَلَ فِيكَ؟ قَالَ: امَا تَقْرَأُ: أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ الآية؟ فَرَسُولُ اللهِ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَأَنَا التَّالِي الشَّاهِدُ مِنْهُ

[ᶜAbbād says:] I heard Ali say in his sermon: "Not a single verse of the Book of God was revealed without my knowing when it was revealed, and about whom it was revealed; there is not a single man among the Quraysh about whom a verse has not been revealed, leading him either to Heaven or Hell."

A man asked: "O Master of the Faithful, which verse was revealed about you?"

He replied:

> Have you not read:
>
> افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه
>
> *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...?* (11:17) God's Messenger is *he...who has insight from his Lord,* and I am the witness of his kind who follows him.

It is also narrated on the authority of Imam Sajjād Zayn al-ᶜĀbidīn, Imam Bāqir, and Imam Ṣādiq.[224]

Qundūzī narrates this hadith from Ibn al-Maghāzilī.

Ninth is a hadith from Imam Hasan Mujtabā. Shaykh Ṭūsī, via his chain of transmission in *al-Amālī*, narrates from Ali Ibn al-Husayn, quoting Imam Hasan as having said in his lengthy sermon in Muᶜāwiyah's presence:

أَقُولُ مَعْشَرَ الْخَلَائِقِ وَلَكُمْ أَفْئِدَةٌ وَأَسْمَاعٌ: وَهُوَ: إِنَّا أَهْلُ بَيْتٍ أَكْرَمَنَا اللهُ بِالْإِسْلَامِ وَاخْتَارَنَا وَاصْطَفَانَا وَاجْتَبَانَا فَأَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الرِّجْسَ وَطَهَّرَنَا تَطْهِيراً، وَالرِّجْسُ هُوَ الشَّكُّ فَلَا شَكَّ فِي اللهِ الْحَقِّ وَدِينِهِ أَبداً، وَطَهَّرَنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أَفِنٍ وَعَيْبَةٍ مُخْلَصِينَ إِلَى آدَمَ نِعْمَةً مِنْهُ، لَمْ يَفْتَرِقِ النَّاسُ فِرْقَتَيْنِ إِلَّا جَعَلَنَا اللهُ فِي خَيْرِهِمَا فَاتَ الْأُمُورُ إِلَى أَنْ بَعَثَ اللهُ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلنُّبُوَّةِ وَاخْتَارَهُ لِلرِّسَالَةِ وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ كِتَابَهُ ثُمَّ أَمَرَهُ بِالدُّعَاءِ إِلَى اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَكَانَ أَبِي عليه السلام أَوَّلَ مَنِ اسْتَجَابَ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَأَوَّلَ مَنْ آمَنَ وَصَدَّقَ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، وَقَدْ قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابِهِ الْمُنَزَّلِ عَلَى نَبِيِّهِ الْمُرْسَلِ: «أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ». فَرَسُولُ اللهِ الَّذِي عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَأَبِي الَّذِي يَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ سَاقَ الْخُطْبَةَ وَهِيَ طَوِيلَةٌ.[225]

O ye people. You have hearts and ears. We are a Household whom God has honored with Islam. He has chosen, picked, and selected us, kept all impurity away from us, and cleansed us thoroughly.

Impurity means doubt, and we never doubt God, the Real, or His religion; He has cleansed us of every stupidity and flaw, purified us all the way back to Adam as a blessing from Him.

Whenever people were divided into two groups, He put us in the best of them of those gone by, up until God sent Muhammad as a Prophet, chose him as a Messenger, and revealed the Book to him. He then commanded him to call people to God, Mighty and Sublime is He. My father was the first to respond to the Exalted God and His Messenger and the first to believe in God and His Messenger. The Exalted God says in His Book revealed to His Messenger Prophet:

افمن كان على بينة من ربه ويتلوه شاهد منه

Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him ...? (11:17) God's Messenger is he who has insight from his Lord, and my father was he who followed him and was a witness of his kind....

Shaykh Ṭūsī narrates this long sermon, in its entirety, from Imam Hasan.

Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī cites a brief extract from it, pertaining to the aforementioned verse, in his exegesis, on the authority of *al-Amālī*.

Qundūzī Ḥanafī also cites Imam Hasan's sermon including the reliance on the verse as evidence.[226]

Hadiths from Imam Ali

Tenth are numerous hadiths narrated by the Master of the Faithful himself. In terms of content and style, the hadiths fall into various categories.

The first are hadiths that only cite the verse under discussion. Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates via three chains of transmission from Ibn ᶜAbbās:

سَمِعْتُ عَلِيّاً يَقُولُ: قَوْلُ اللهِ تَعَالَى: «أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ» رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ وَأَنَا الشَّاهِدُ[227]

"I heard Ali say about the Exalted God's words: *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his kind follows him...?* (11:17): God's Messenger has insight and I am the witness."

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī narrates a similar hadith from Ḥamwīnī's *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, from Ibn ᶜAbbās and Zādhān, quoting the Master of the Faithful.[228] Similarly, Ḥamwīnī narrates it via one chain of transmission from Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh, and via another, from Bakhtarī—both quoting the Master of the Faithful, Ali.[229]

Abū Nuᶜaym Iṣfahānī, Thaᶜlabī, and Wāqidī narrate it via their chains of transmission from Ibn ᶜAbbās, Zādhān, and Jābir, all quoting Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.[230]

ᶜAllāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī cites it on the authority of *Tafsīr al-Burhān* on the authority of Ibn Mardawayh, quoting Ali.[231]

Suyūṭī cites it on the authority of Abū Ḥātim, Ibn Mardawayh and Abū Nuᶜaym,[232] and, from Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn ᶜAsākir[233] from Ali.

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates it via two chains of narration from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh,[234] and, via a third one from Ḥārith from Ali.[235]

The second category is hadiths in which he says: "If a cushion were folded for me, I would sit on it and judge all the people of heavenly religions by their scriptures." One of the many things he says is that the aforementioned verse was revealed about him.

Ḥamwīnī narrates via his chain of transmission in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* on the authority of Zādhān:

سَمِعْتُ عَلِيًّا يَقُولُ: وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ لَوْ كُسِرَتْ لِي وِسَادَةٌ (يَقُولُ ثُنِيَتْ) فَأَجْلِسُ عَلَيْهَا لَحَكَمْتُ بَيْنَ أَهْلِ التَّوْرَاةِ بِتَوْرَاتِهِمْ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِإِنْجِيلِهِمْ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الزَّبُورِ بِزَبُورِهِمْ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْفُرْقَانِ بِفُرْقَانِهِمْ. وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ جَرَتْ عَلَيْهِ الْمَوَاسِي إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَعْرِفُ آيَةً تَسُوقُهُ إِلَى جَنَّةٍ أَوْ تَسُوقُهُ إِلَى نَارٍ، فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ: أَيْنَ نَزَلَ فِيكَ؟ فَقَالَ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ، فَرَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ أَنَا شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ.[236]

I heard Ali say:

> By God Who breaks the seed [within the earth], and creates the soul, if a cushion were broken in [folded, according to another edition] for me, I would sit on it and judge the people of the Torah by their Torah, the people of the Gospels by their Gospels, the people of the Psalms by their Psalms, and the people of the Proof (*Furqān*) by their Proof (*Furqān*).
>
> By God, Who breaks the seed [within the earth], and creates the soul, there is not a single man from Quraysh over whom razors have passed, for whom I do not know a verse, either leading him to Heaven or leading him to Hell.

Then, a man stood up and asked: "O Master of the Faithful, what was revealed about you?'" Ali replied:

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ

"Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his [kind] follows him...? (11:17) The Prophet of God has insight from his Lord and I, a witness of his kind, follow him."

Thaʿlabī also cites this hadith in his exegesis, on the authority of Zādhān, quoting the Imam.[237] It is cited by Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ṣaffār in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* on the authority of Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah quoting the Imam,[238] by ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, citing *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*,[239] and Ḥākim Ḥaskānī via two chains of transmission, one of which is from Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm Kūfī via his chain of transmission from Ḥabīb Ibn Yasār.[240] Ṭabarī narrates it via his chain of transmission from Jābir Ibn ʿAbdillāh quoting Ali.[241]

The Imam's Sermon in Kūfa

The hadith that gives a particular and detailed account of the Imam's attributes is the one narrated by Ḥamwīnī, via his chain of transmission, from Abū al-Muʾayyad Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Makkī, via an unbroken Sunni chain of transmission from Nūḥ Ibn Qays, from Aʿmash, from Omar Ibn Murrah, from Abū al-Bakhtarī:

قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ ابنَ عَمِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلم عَلِياً عليه السّلام صَعِدَ الْمِنْبَرَ بِالْكُوفَةِ عَلَيْهِ مِدْرَعَةٌ كَانَتْ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُتَقَلِّداً بِسَيْفِ رَسُولِ اللهِ مُتَعَمِّماً بِعِمَامَةِ رَسُولِ اللهِ وَفِي إِصْبَعِهِ خَاتَمُ رَسُولِ اللهِ فَقَعَدَ عليه السّلام عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ وَكَشَفَ عَنْ بَطْنِهِ وَقَالَ اسْأَلُونِي مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَفْقِدُونِي فَإِنَّ مَا بَيْنَ الْجَوَانِحِ مِنِّي عِلْمٌ جَمٌّ، هَذَا سَفَطُ الْعِلْمِ هَذَا لُعَابُ رَسُولِ اللهِ، هَذَا مَا زَقَّنِي رَسُولُ اللهِ زَقّاً مِن غَيْرِ وَحْيٍ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ فَوَاللهِ لَوْ ثُنِّيَتْ لِيَ الْوِسَادَةُ فَجَلَسْتُ عَلَيْهَا لأَفْتَيْتُ لِأَهْلِ التَّوْرَاةِ بِتَوْرَاتِهِمْ وَلأَهْلِ الإِنْجِيلِ بِإِنْجِيلِهِمْ حَتَّى يُنْطِقَ اللهُ التَّوْرَاةَ وَالإِنْجِيلَ فَتَقُولُ: صَدَقَ عَلِيٌّ، قَدْ أَفْتَاكُمْ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ فِيَّ، وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ: وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ

[Abū al-Bakhtarī] said:

> I saw that God's Messenger's paternal cousin, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, had ascended the pulpit in Kūfa. He was wearing a hauberk that had belonged to God's Messenger and had God's Messenger's sword slung round his neck, and he was wearing God's Messenger's turban and had God's Messenger's ring on his finger. He sat on the pulpit, uncovered his stomach, and said:
>
> > O people, ask me whatever occurs to you before you lose me because between my sides is much knowledge. This is the basket of knowledge. This is God's Messenger's saliva. This is what God's Messenger fed my beak, revealing to me prior to revelation.
> >
> > I swear by God, if a cushion were folded for me, I would judge the people of the Torah by their Torah and the people of the Gospels by their Gospels until God makes the Torah and Gospels speak and they say: "Ali has spoken the truth. He has passed judgment for you in accordance with what was revealed in me *while you read the Book; have you then no sense?* (2:44):
> >
> > وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ
> >
> > *and a witness of his [kind] follows him...*" (11:17)

In the third category are hadiths from the Imam concerning the background of the revelation of the verse, which do not include "If the cushion were folded for me" but do include "There is not a single man from Quraysh, over whom the razors have passed, for whom I do not know a verse, either leading him to Heaven or leading him to Hell. Thereupon, Ibn al-Kawwā' stood up to him and asked: 'What has been revealed about you?'" Most of the hadiths do not mention his name. They just say:

> A man stood up to him and asked...and the Imam recited the Exalted God's words:
>
> أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ
>
> *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his kind follows him ...?* He then explains that *he...who has insight* means God's Messenger, and that the *witness* means himself.

In some of these hadiths he says: "By God, your knowing what God has bestowed upon us, the Household, would be dearer to me than all the red gold or white silver."

Examples of these hadiths are those narrated by Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfiʿī on the authority of ʿAbbād Ibn ʿAbdillāh:

سَمِعْتُ عَلِيّاً يَقُولُ: مَا نَزَلَتْ آيَةٌ فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ مَتَى نَزَلَتْ؟ وَفِيمَ أُنْزِلَتْ؟ وَمَا مِنْ قُرَشِيٍّ رَجُلٌ إِلَّا قَدْ نَزَلَتْ فِيهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ تَسُوقُهُ إِلَى جَنَّةٍ أَوْ نَارٍ. فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَمَا نَزَلَتْ فِيكَ؟ فَقَالَ: لَوْ لَا أَنَّكَ سَأَلْتَنِي عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْمَلَأِ مَا حَدَّثْتُكَ، أَمَا تَقْرَأُ: أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ؟ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَأَنَا الشَّاهِدُ مِنْهُ، اتْلُوهُ وَاتَّبِعْهُ وَاللهِ لَإِنْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَا خَصَّنَا اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِهِ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنْ ذَهَبَةٍ حَمْرَاءَ أَوْ فِضَّةٍ بَيْضَاءَ.[242]

I heard Ali say: "Not a single verse of God's Book was revealed without my knowing when it was revealed or about what it was revealed. There is not a single man from Quraysh about whom a verse has not been revealed that leads him either to Heaven or to Hell." A man then stood up to him and asked: "Commander of the Faithful, what was revealed about you?" He replied:

> If you hadn't asked me in front of everyone, I wouldn't have told you! Do you not read: *Is he then who has insight from his Lord and a witness of his kind follows him...?* God's Messenger was he who has insight from his Lord, and I am the witness who comes after him and

follows him. By God, your knowing what God has bestowed upon us, the Household, is dearer to me than red gold or white silver.

The Chain of Transmission

An abridged version of this hadith is related by Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī[243] on the authority of Ibn al-Maghāzilī. Suyūṭī cites it on the authority of Abū Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawayh. It is also cited by Abū Nuᶜaym Iṣfahānī in *Maᶜrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* and by Ḥākim Ḥaskānī as hadith 375, via his chain of transmission from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh, hadith 377 from Bassām Ibn ᶜAbdillāh, hadith 378 from Abdullāh Ibn Najī, hadith 379 via another chain from Jābir quoting ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Najī, and hadith 386 from Zādhān.

Abū Nuᶜaym Iṣfahānī cites it in his biographical entry on Imam Ali in *Maᶜrifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, page 22 via his chain of transmission from Ṭabarānī on the authority of ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Asadī.[244] Ṭabarī cites it in his exegesis under the relevant verse via his chain of transmission on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Yaḥyā.[245]

Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī cites it on the authority of *Tafsīr al-Thaᶜlabī*, from Ḥabīb Ibn Yasār from Zādhān.[246]

ᶜAllāmah Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī narrates it from the Sunnis in *Ghāyat al-Marām* on the authority of al-Ḥamwīnī, via his chain of transmission from Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh al-Anṣārī;[247] on the authority c Wāḥidī, via his chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh;[248] from *Nuṣḥ al Khaṭīb* on the authority of Ibn al-Kawwā', but without citing the chain of transmission;[249] from Qāḍī Othman Ibn Aḥmad's and Abū Naṣr Qushayrī's books;[250] from Thaᶜlabī on the authority of Imam Ali but without citing the chain of transmission;[251] from Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfiᶜī on the authority of ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Shāfiᶜī but without citing the chain of transmission;[252] from Jabrī under the heading "hadith 21";[253] from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ḥārith, as hadith 22,[254] and, from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd citing *al-Ghārāt*, from Minhāl Ibn Omar on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ḥārith.[255] From the Shiᶜa, he cites Shaykh Ṭūsī's *Amālī*, via his chain of transmission from the Master of the Faithful;[256] from *al-Amālī* by Shaykh Mufid, via his chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh;[257] from ᶜAyyāshī on the authority of Jābir on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Yaḥyā quoting the Master of the Faithful,[258] and from Ali Ibn ᶜĪsā ᶜAyyāshī's *Kashf al-Ghummah*[259], from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Asadī quoting Ali.

ᶜAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī quotes *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, which quotes Abū Nuᶜaym, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and Ibn Mardawayh on the authority of Imam Ali.[260]

ᶜAllāmah Majlisī narrates it from the Shaykh's *Amālī* on the authority of Diᶜbil's brother from Imam Riḍā from his forefathers from the Commander of the Faithful,[261] and similarly, from Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm's exegesis via his chain, on the authority of Abū Baṣīr and Fuḍayl Ibn Yasār from Imam Bāqir;[262] from *al-Iḥtijāj* by Shaykh Ṭabarsī, on the authority of Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī Kūfī;[263] from *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, via a chain from Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah;[264] from *Tafsīr al-ᶜAyyāshī* from Burayd Ibn Muᶜāwiyah al-ᶜIjlī from Imam Muhammad Bāqir;[265] from *Tafsīr al-ᶜAyyāshī* on the authority of Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh al-Anṣārī and ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Yaḥyā;[266] from *al-Manāqib* by Ibn Shahr Āshūb citing *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, via a chain from Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh quoting Ali, and from Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah, Imam Zayn al-ᶜĀbidīn, Imam Bāqir, Imam Ṣādiq and Imām Riḍā on the authority of Imam Ali;[267] from *al-Majālis* by Shaykh Mufīd via a chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh;[268] from *Tafsīr Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm*, via eight chains: i) Husayn Ibn Saʿīd, via his chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn Abdillāh; ii) Jaᶜfar Ibn Muhammad Fazārī, via his chain from Zādhān; iii) Husayn Ibn Saʿīd via his chain from Zādhān; iv) Jaᶜfar Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hishām via his chain from Hasan Ibn Husayn, v) Husayn Ibn Ḥakam via his chain from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā from Imam Bāqir; vi) Husayn Ibn Saʿīd via his chain from Zādhān, but worded differently from the above; vii) Muhammad Ibn ᶜĪsā Ibn Zakariyyā al-Falāḥ via his chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh; and viii) ᶜUbayd Ibn Kathīr via his chain from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Yaḥyā;[269] similarly from *Kashf al-Ghummah* on the authority of Abū Bakr Ibn Mardawayh quoting ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Asadī,[270] and from *al-Ṭarāʾif* by Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs from Ibn al-Maghāzilī.[271]

However, all these hadiths, as well those that precede them, tell the same story—that the Master of the Faithful ascended the pulpit in Kūfa and spoke of his vast knowledge. A man then stood up and asked the Imam if there was any verse about himself. The Imam replied by reciting the aforementioned verse and explaining it. The incident has been reported as each of the narrators saw fit but without changing the meaning.

The Sermon "Ask Me Before You Lose Me," Ibn al-Kawwāʾ's Questions, and Imam Ali's Replies

The best narration is by Shaykh Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī in *Nuṣḥ al-Khaṭīb*:

One day, the Master of the Faithful ascended the pulpit in Kūfa Mosque and said:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي فَإِنَّ الْعِلْمَ يَفِيضُ بَيْنَ جَنْبَيَّ فَيَضاً لَوْ وَجَدَ مُسْتَفاضاً. أَلا وَإِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ فِئَةٍ باغِيَةٍ وَأُخْرى هادِيَةٍ إِلَّا أَخْبَرْتُكُمْ بِهادِيها وَباغِيها وَسائِقِها وَقائِدِها إِلى يَوْمِ الْقِيامَةِ

"Ask me before you lose me, for indeed the knowledge within me would flood out in a torrent if it had whither to flood. You will not ask me about a single group, renegade or well-guided, without my telling you [which one is] well-guided and [which one is] renegade and [who] its herder and leader [are] up to the Day of Resurrection."

Thereafter Ibn al-Kawwā' stood up and said:

مَا ادَّعى مِثْلَهُ نَبِيٌّ وَلَا وَصِيٌّ.

"No prophet or executor has claimed the like."

The Master of the Faithful told him: "You do not ask to understand. Instead you ask to try to cause confusion." Ibn al-Kawwā' said: "But we are instructed to ask whatever we do not know." [The Imam] replied:

سَلْ تَفَقُّهاً وَلَا تَسْأَلْ تَعَنُّتاً

"Ask to understand, not to cause confusion

وَسَلْ عَمَّا يَعْنِيكَ

and ask about what concerns you!"

Ibn al-Kawwā' said: "I shall ask about what concerns me."

The Imam then told him: "Ask." He said:

أَخْبِرْنِي مَا الذَّارِياتِ ذَرْواً؟

"Tell me what are the scatterers that scatter (*al-dhāriyāt dharwā*)?"

قَالَ: تِلْكَ الرِّياحُ.

He replied: "Those winds."

He asked: "What are those that bear their load (*al-hāmilāt wiqrā*)?"

He replied: "The heavy clouds."

He asked: "What are those that speed lightly along (*al-jāriyāt yusrā*)?"

He replied: "The ships floating on the sea."

He asked: "What are those that apportion as commanded (*al-muqassimāt amrā*)?"

He replied: "The angels who distribute people's provisions."

He asked: "Where is the inhabited house (*al-Bayt al-Maᶜmūr*)?"

He replied: "It is a house in Heaven, entered by 70,000 angels every day, wave after wave. The first wave [then] enters it again [and so on] until the Day of Resurrection."

He asked: "Was Dhū al-Qarnayn a king or a prophet?"

He replied: "He was neither a king nor a prophet. Rather, he was a righteous servant to God. He loved God and God loved him. He advised God's servants."

He asked: "Were his horns (*qarnāhu*) golden or silver?"

He replied:

> He did not have any horns, so neither golden nor silver. He called his people to God, but they hit him on his right temporal ridge (*qarnihi al-ayman*). He then stayed away from them for a while, then called them to God a second time, but they hit him on his left temporal ridge (*qarnihi al-aysar*). Thereafter, he was called Dhū al-Qarnayn. There is one like him among you.

(He meant himself because he was hit on the head twice: once at the Battle of the Confederates (*Ghazwat al-Aḥzāb*) when ᶜAmr Ibn ᶜAbd Widd struck him, and then in his prayer-niche (*miḥrāb*) when Ibn Muljam al-Murādī struck him. That is why the Prophet of God stated: "Ali is this nation's differentiator (*fārūq*) righteous one (*ṣiddīq*) and Dhū Qarnayn").[272]

He said:

> Tell me, about whom this verse was revealed?
>
> أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ؟
>
> *Have you not seen those who swapped God's favour for ungratefulness and installed their people in the abode of perdition?* (14:28)

He replied:

هُمَا الأَجْرَانِ مِن قُرَيْشٍ بَنُو أُمَيَّةَ وَبَنُو الْمُغِيرَةِ

"It is about the worst two groups of debauchees from Quraysh: the Umayyads and the Sons of Mughīrah."

He said: "Tell me about His words, Exalted is He:

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا؟

Say: Should we tell you who the biggest losers are through [their] deeds?"

[The Imam] replied:

أهل حروراء يعني خوارج

"The people of Ḥurūrā', meaning the Khārijites."

[Ibn al-Kawwā'] asked: "What is the galaxy?"

المجرّة

[The Imam] replied:

شِرَاجُ السَّماءِ مِنها هَبَطَ الماءُ المُنهَمِرُ

"Courses in Heaven from which heavy rain-water falls."

[Ibn al-Kawwā'] asked: "What is Quzaḥ's Bow (a rainbow)?"

The Imam replied: "Don't say 'Quzaḥ,' because it is Satan's name. Say, "God's Bow." There is in it salvation from drowning."

He said: "Tell me about the waning of the moon's crescent," so the Imam recited His words, Exalted is He:

وَجَعَلْنَا الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ءَايَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا ءَايَةَ الَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا ءَايَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً

And We made the night and day two signs. Then We made the sign that is the night dark, and made the sign that is the day illuminating... (17:12)

He said: "Tell me about God's Messenger's companions."

The Imam asked: "Whom should I tell you about?"

He said: "About ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Masᶜūd."

قَرَأَ القُرآنَ ثُمَّ وَقَفَ عِندَهُ

The Imam recited the Qur'an and then stopped at that. He said: "Tell me about Abū Dharr."

The Imam replied:

عَالِمٌ شَحِيحٌ عَلَى عِلْمِهِ

"A scholar, fiercely protective of his knowledge."

He said: "Tell me about Salmān."

The Imam replied:

أَدْرَكَ عِلْمَ الْاَوَّلِ وَالْآخِرِ وَهُوَ بَحْرٌ لَا يُنْزَحُ وَمَنْ لَكَ بِلُقْمَانَ الْحَكِيمِ وَهُوَ مِنَّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ

"Salmān understood the knowledge of the first and the last; he is a sea whose water never drains; he is similar to Luqmān the Wise. He is one of us—the Household."

He asked: "Tell me about Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān."

The Imam replied:

عَرَّافٌ بِالْمُنَافِقِينَ، وَسَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللهِ عَنِ الْمَعْضِلَاتِ، وَإِنْ سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُ خَبِيراً بِهَا

"Ḥudhayfah knew the hypocrites well and asked God's Messenger about conundra. If you ask him them, you will find him knowledgeable in them."

He said: "Tell me about ʿAmmār Ibn Yāsir."

The Imam replied:

خَالَطَ الْإِسْلَامُ لَحْمَهُ وَدَمَهُ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَى النَّارِ، كَيْفَمَا دَارَ الْحَقُّ دَارَ مَعَهُ

"Islam is mixed into his blood and flesh. Hell is not permitted to take him. Wherever he turns, the truth turns with him."

He said: "Tell me about yourself."

The Imam replied:

قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَكَذَلِكَ قَالَ: وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ

God, the Exalted, says: *Do not praise yourselves* (53:32). He says: *As for the blessing of your Lord, talk about it.* (93:11)

كُنْتُ أَوَّلَ دَاخِلٍ وَآخِرَ خَارِجٍ، وَكُنْتُ إِذَا سَأَلْتُ أُعْطِيتُ وَإِذَا سَكَتُّ ابْتُدِيتُ، وَبَيْنَ جَوَانِحِي عِلْمٌ جَمٌّ

I was the first to enter, and the last to leave. Whenever I asked I would be given and whenever I remained silent the initiative would be taken with me.[273] Within me is much knowledge.

He asked: "What in the Qur'an was revealed about you?"

[The Imam] replied:

> Have you not read Sūrat Hūd:
>
> أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ
>
> *Is he then who has insight from his Lord, and a witness of his [kind] follows him...?* He who has insight from his Lord is God's Messenger and the witness for him who follows him means me.

Ibn al-Kawwā' said:

وَحَقِّكَ لَا اتَّبَعْتُ أَحَداً بَعْدَكَ

"By your right, may I not follow anyone after you."[274]

The blessed Mīrzā Abū al-Hasan Sha'rānī says in his footnote to [Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī's] exegesis of this verse:

> Majlisī cites this hadith on the authority of *al-Ghārāt* by Ibrāhīm al-Thaqafī in *Biḥār al-Anwār*. The only difference is that instead of the plural form:
>
> سِرَاجِ السماء
>
> he uses the singular form:
>
> شرج السماء
>
> meaning the channel of water [as if the Imam meant to compare the light course in the heavens with the water channels on the surface of the land].[275]

In any case, this sermon by the Imam from atop the pulpit in Kūfa Mosque seems to have been delivered after the Battle of Nahrawān, when the Imam's martyrdom was imminent, as suggested by:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي.

Strong evidence to support this is the authoritative version of this sermon in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, in which the Imam refers to the Battle of Nahrawān and the defeat of the Khārijites:

أَمَا بَعْدُ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ فَأَنَا فَقَأْتُ عَيْنَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِيَجْرُءَ عَلَيْهَا أَحَدٌ غَيْرِي بَعْدَ أَنْ مَاجَ غَيْهَبُهَا وَاشْتَدَّ كَلَبُهَا، فَاسْأَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ فِيمَا بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ السَّاعَةِ وَلَا عَنْ فِئَةٍ تَهْدِي مِائَةً وَتُضِلُّ مِائَةً إِلَّا أَنْبَأْتُكُمْ بِنَاعِقِهَا وَقَائِدِهَا وَسَائِقِهَا وَمُنَاخِ رِكَابِهَا وَمَحَطِّ رِحَالِهَا وَمَنْ يُقْتَلُ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا قَتْلًا وَيَمُوتُ مِنْهُمْ مَوْتًا، وَلَوْ قَدْ فَقَدْتُمُونِي وَنَزَلَتْ بِكُمْ كَرَائِهُ الْأُمُورِ وَحَوَازِبُ الْخُطُوبِ لَأَطْرَقَ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ السَّائِلِينَ وَفَشِلَ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ الْمَسْئُولِينَ.[276]

Now then, O ye people, I poked out the eye of sedition when no one else but me dared to do so, after its darkness had surged, and its madness had become severe.

So ask me before you lose me from among you. For, by Him, in Whose Hand my soul is, you will not ask me about anything between you [now] and the Hour, or about any group—a hundred of whom are guided and a hundred of whom go astray—without my telling you who their donkey is and who their leader is, where their stopping place and waystation is, which of their people will be killed and which will die a natural death!

If you lose me, and unpleasant things and distressing states befall you, many people with questions will look down and many answerers will fail...

The above was a collection of hadiths on the background to the revelation of the verse

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ

which is about the Master of the Faithful.

The time has now come to learn what

شَاهِدٌ

and

يَتْلُوهُ

mean, and what an honor it is for the Master of the Faithful to be a witness.

Being Made the Witness Was the Imam's Greatest Achievement

As God's Messenger says:

مَا أَنْزَلَ اللهُ آيَةً فِي القُرآنِ فِيهَا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَّا وَعَلِيٌّ رَأْسُهَا وَأَمِيرُهَا وَشَرِيفُهَا، فَلَقَدْ عَاتَبَ اللهُ أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ فِي القُرآنِ، وَمَا ذَكَرَ عَلِيًّا إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ

God has not revealed any verse in the Qur'an that includes

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

O you who believe without Ali being their chief, master, and nobleman. God rebuked Muhammad's companions in the Qur'an but said nothing but good about Ali.

In any event, in answer to that man's question about his status and place in the Qur'an, the Imam described himself as

وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ

Thus, it is clear that the title of

شَاهِدٌ

is so great and exalted that no position or degree compares to it; even the verses:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ رٰكِعُونَ. (5:55)

يٰأَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ (5:67)

اَلْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ، (5:3)

اَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلٰمَ دِينًا. (5:3)

all of which are about the Imam, and show his high status and position, but do not reach the level of

وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ

Even though the word

شَاهِدٌ

here means actually giving evidence, giving evidence without having been called as a witness is inconceivable. That is, the Master of the Faithful was given all the enormous knowledge, perfections, and attributes that are the insight (*bayyinah*) that is the very light of prophecy, or unlimited divine insight (*baṣīrah*). In other words, being a witness is the partner to that divine attribute conferred by God upon His noblest Prophet.

That is why the verse puts the Imam's testimony on the same level as the light of prophecy or unlimited divine insight and the Imam on the same level as him who had insight, namely God's Messenger. Evidence in support of this is prophetic hadiths narrated by both the Shi'a and Sunnis: "God created my light and Ali's light from a single world."

عَلِيٌّ مِنِّي كَنَفْسِي [277]

"Ali is like my own soul to me."

أَنْتَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هَارُونَ مِنْ مُوسَى إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي. [278]

"You are to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no prophet after me." They mean that Ali was like all the other prophets in all

respects. He had their proficiencies, conditions, knowledge, and divine insight, and the light of prophecy conferred by God upon them, except that he was not given prophecy, because it ended with the Master of the Prophets, Muhammad—"There is no prophet after me."

Imam Ali says:

وَاَنَا مِن رَسُولِ اللهِ كَالصِّنوِ مِنَ الصِّنوِ وَالذِّراعِ مِنَ العَضُدِ.[279]

"I am to God's Messenger as one of a pair is to the other, or as the forearm is to the upper arm."

In any event, because

شهادة

also means "attendance" and a

شَاهِدٌ

"is present," then

وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ

means that the insight and divine light were always with Ali, who was like the Prophet's own self, and he was always privy to, present at, and in control of them. This verse is just like the one discussed before it:

قُلْ كَفَى بِاللهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

The Imam is the Prophet's Pupil and Just One Level Below Him

Because

شَهِيد

and

شَاهِد

mean the same thing, and, as we said, there is in the verse a whiff of the Master of the Faithful's testimony being on a par with God's testimony, here too, the Imam's testimony is put on the same level as God's Messenger's prophecy. Obviously being this witness, which means being privy to divine secrets and knowledge and the degrees of the prophethood, necessarily means reaching the highest levels of closeness to God and being annihilated in the Essence of Unity, and comprehending the links and communications between Gabriel and the noblest Prophet, being certain of the source of the facts, and finally quenching his thirst through God's endless knowledge.

However, it must be known that the word

يَتْلُوهُ

means that the status of the Master of the Faithful follows that of God's Messenger and is next to it. This can be relied on as evidence for his Imamate and immediate succession to God's Messenger.

The virtue and perfection transferred to Ali from God's Messenger. God's Messenger was his master, instructor, and trainer; the Prophet's soul was stronger than Ali's soul. Therefore, what some poets and Sufis say and think—that the Imam was superior to God's Messenger, and that the Prophet was just an introduction to the Imam and bringer of good news of him, perhaps relying on Ali's climbing on the Prophet's shoulders to smash the idols in the Kaʿbah—is totally wrong. Proof of that is in Ali's own words:

وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَوْضِعِي مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِالْقَرَابَةِ الْقَرِيبَةِ وَالْمَنْزِلَةِ الْخَصِيصَةِ، وَضَعَنِي فِي حِجْرِهِ وَأَنَا وَلِيدٌ يَضُمُّنِي إِلَى صَدْرِهِ، وَيَكْنُفُنِي إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ، وَيُمِسُّنِي جَسَدَهُ، وَيُشِمُّنِي عَرْفَهُ، وَكَانَ يَمْضَغُ الشَّيْءَ ثُمَّ يُلْقِمُنِيهِ وَمَا وَجَدَ لِي كَذْبَةً فِي قَوْلٍ وَلَا خَطْلَةً فِي فِعْلٍ. وَلَقَدْ قَرَنَ اللهُ بِهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ لَدُنْ أَنْ كَانَ فَطِيماً أَعْظَمَ مَلَكٍ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ يَسْلُكُ بِهِ طَرِيقَ الْمَكَارِمِ وَمَحَاسِنِ أَخْلَاقِ الْعَالَمِ لَيْلَهُ وَنَهَارَهُ. وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَتَّبِعُهُ اتِّبَاعَ الْفَصِيلِ أَثَرَ أُمِّهِ، يَرْفَعُ لِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِنْ أَخْلَاقِهِ عَلَماً وَيَأْمُرُنِي بِالِاقْتِدَاءِ بِهِ. وَلَقَدْ كَانَ يُجَاوِرُ فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ بِحِرَاءَ فَأَرَاهُ وَلَا يَرَاهُ غَيْرِي وَلَمْ يَجْمَعْ بَيْتٌ وَاحِدٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ غَيْرَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَخَدِيجَةَ وَأَنَا ثَالِثُهُمَا، أَرَى نُورَ الْوَحْيِ وَالرِّسَالَةِ وَأَشَمُّ رِيحَ النُّبُوَّةِ، وَلَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ رَنَّةَ الشَّيْطَانِ حِينَ نَزَلَ الْوَحْيُ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، مَا هَذِهِ الرَّنَّةُ؟ فَقَالَ: هَذَا الشَّيْطَانُ أَيِسَ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، إِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ مَا أَسْمَعُ وَتَرَى مَا أَرَى إِلَّا أَنَّكَ لَسْتَ بِنَبِيٍّ وَلَكِنَّكَ وَزِيرٌ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خَيْرٍ.[280]

You have realized my status *vis à vis* God's Messenger—my close relationship to him, special position, and weakness on his lap when I was a newborn, and his hugging me to his chest, and letting me lie in his bed, carrying me on his shoulders to his bed, having me pressed against his body and allowing me to smell his perspiration. He would chew something and then put it my mouth. He never heard me lie or saw me do anything unpleasant.

God, the Blessed and Exalted, assigned the greatest angel among His angels to accompany him from the moment he was weaned, traveling the path of the noblest and best manners in the world, day and night. I would follow him like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day he would raise a banner of his ethics and tell me to follow it.

> Every year, he would seclude himself on Ḥirā'. I would see him and no one else could see him. No other house was all Muslim apart from God's Messenger, Khadijah, and me as the third.
>
> I would see the light of the revelation and the message, and smell the fragrance of prophecy. I heard Satan ring when revelation came down to [the Prophet]. I then asked: "God's Messenger, what is this ringing?" The Prophet answered: "This is the cry of Satan, despairing of being served. You hear whatever I hear, and see whatever I see, except that you are not a prophet. However, you are a vizier and you have a good future..."

It is clear from this sermon delivered by the Imam that the Master of the Faithful's status was hierarchically below the Prophet's, and he held the rank of prophet's vizier. All his knowledge and perfection were drawn from the Prophet's. God's Messenger was in the veil closest to God. The Master of the Faithful was one step lower. The level of Unity, sincerity, and praise also transferred to the Imam from God's Messenger. Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm's exegesis relates via an unbroken chain of transmission from Imam Ṣādiq on the authority of his father on the authority of his forefathers on the authority of God's Messenger:

> When the Blessed and Exalted God gathers all people together on the Day of Resurrection, He will set up a thousand-stepped pulpit for me. I will then climb on top. Gabriel will bring me the Banner of Praise and put it in my hand, saying: "Muhammad, this is the laudable position that the Exalted God promised you."
>
> I will then tell Ali: "Climb up." He will be one step lower. I will then put the Banner of Praise in his hand. Thereafter, Riḍwān will bring the keys to Heaven, and say: "Muhammad, this is the laudable position that the Exalted God has promised you." He will then put them in my hand, but I will put them on Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's lap. Mālik, Hell's custodian, will then come and say: "Muhammad, this is the laudable position that the Exalted God has promised you. These are the keys to Hell. Send your enemy and your nation's enemy to Hell." I will take them but put them on Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib's lap.

There are numerous hadiths the contents of which are similar to this one, in Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm's exegesis,[281] *al-Amālī*[282] by Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, *al-Amālī*[283] by Shaykh Ṭūsī, and also *al-Khiṣāl*[284] by Ibn Bābawayh—Shaykh Ṣadūq.

There are also hadiths that say that Imam Ali beseeches God's Messenger on the Day of Resurrection, reaching his positions with his help. Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm narrates via his chain of transmission from

Sulaymān Daylamī on the authority of Imam Ṣādiq on the authority of the Master of the Faithful:

...God's Messenger will say:

ثُمَّ يُدعى بِكَ فَيَتَطاوَلُ إِلَيْكَ الخَلائِقُ فَيَقُولُونَ مَا يُعْرَفُ فِي النَّبِيِّينَ فَيُنادِي مُنادٍ: هَذَا سَيِّدُ الوَصِيِّينَ، ثُمَّ تَصْعَدُ فَنَعانِقُ عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ تَأْخُذُ بِحُجْزَتِي وَآخُذُ بِحُجْزَةِ اللهِ وَهُوَ الحَقُّ وَتَأْخُذُ ذُرِّيَّتُكَ بِحُجْزَتِكَ وَتَأْخُذُ شِيعَتُكَ بِحُجْزَةِ ذُرِّيَّتِكَ.[285]

> Then you will be called, but the creatures will crane their necks, saying: "He is not known as a prophet." A Caller will then call: "This is the Master of all Executors."
>
> You will then climb up and we will hug on it. You will then start beseeching me, and I will beseech God, the Real. Your offspring will start beseeching you, and your followers will start beseeching your offspring.

We should realize the Imam's status and position from those widely reported, or rather, indubitable hadiths, which say that God's Messenger made Ali his brother. He was his equal and partner in every respect, but he derived his perfection from the Prophet, because it was the Prophet who made him his brother, not Ali who made the Prophet his brother.

Being called [the Prophet's] brother was an honor for Ali, not for God's Messenger. People say:

هُوَ أَخُو رَسُولِ اللهِ

"He is God's Messenger's brother," not:

رَسُولُ اللهِ أَخُو عَلِيٍّ

"God's Messenger is Ali's brother," even though being a brother is an annexing category and is thus mutual. This is an exception because "brother" can correctly be used as an honorific title.

We can also realize the Imam's position and status from numerous *hadiths* narrated by both Shi'a and Sunnis via their various chains of transmission, such as "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate"

أَنَا مَدِينَةُ العِلْمِ وَعَلِيٌّ بَابُهَا[286]

through which the Imam's rank, level, and position *vis-à-vis* God's Messenger become clear.

All the hadiths that we have just cited, and their counterparts in books on the Imam's virtues (*kutub al-manāqib*), all explain the word

يَتْلُو

because at all times, the Imam followed in God's Messenger's footsteps—may God bless them both and bless their offspring, and God's mercy and blessing be upon them!

Mustadrak al-Wasā'il quotes from *al-Mazār al-Qadīm* a hadith on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir that says:

> I went with my father, Ali Ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, to visit the grave of my forefather Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib in Najaf. My father stood at the holy grave, cried and said:
>
> السَّلَامُ عَلَى أَبِي الائِمَّةِ وَخَلِيلِ النُّبُوَّةِ وَالْمَخْصُوصِ بِالأُخُوَّةِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى يَعْسُوبِ الإِيمَانِ وَمِيزَانِ الأَعْمَالِ وَسَيْفِ ذِي الْجَلَالِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى صَالِحِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَوَارِثِ عِلْمِ النَّبِيِّينَ الْحَاكِمِ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ التَّقْوَى. السَّلَامُ عَلَى حُجَّةِ اللهِ الْبَالِغَةِ وَنِعْمَتِهِ السَّابِغَةِ وَنِقْمَتِهِ الدَّامِغَةِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ الْوَاضِحِ وَالنَّجْمِ اللَّائِحِ وَالإِمَامِ النَّاصِحِ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ.[287]
>
> Peace be upon you, father of the Imams, friend of prophecy, endowed with the title of brother. Peace be upon the drone of belief, the scale of deeds, the sword of the Possessor of Majesty. Peace be upon the righteous one among the believers and the inheritor of the knowledge of the prophets, the arbitrator on the Day of Judgment. Peace be upon the tree of self-restraint. Peace be upon God's copious proof, His abundant blessing and irrefutable vengeance. Peace, God's mercy, and blessings be upon the clear path, the shining star, the sincerely advising Imam.

Shaykh Muhammad Ibn al-Mashhadī says:

> Muhammad Ibn Khālid Ṭayālisī narrates on the authority of Sayf Ibn ʿUmayrah on the authority of Ṣafwān Jammāl: "I went to Najaf with al-Ṣādiq to visit Imam Ali's grave. The Imam stood at the holy grave reciting a lengthy visiting salutation."

We shall now cite parts of it that are relevant to our discussion:

> السَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُتَّقِينَ الأَخْيَارِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى أَخِي رَسُولِ اللهِ وَابْنِ عَمِّهِ وَزَوْجِ ابْنَتِهِ وَالْمَخْلُوقِ مِنْ طِينَتِهِ. السَّلَامُ عَلَى الأَصْلِ الْقَدِيمِ وَالْفَرْعِ الْكَرِيمِ...[288]

Peace be upon the Master of the good, God-fearing. Peace be upon God's Messenger's brother, paternal cousin and husband to his daughter, created from his clay. Peace be upon the ancient root and the noble branch...

اخي نَبِيِّكَ وَوَصِيِّ رَسُولِكَ البائِتِ عَلَى فِراشِهِ وَالمُواسِي لَهُ بِنَفْسِهِ وَكاشِفِ الكَرْبِ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ، الَّذي جَعَلْتَهُ سَيْفاً لِنُبُوَّتِهِ وَآيَةً لِرِسالَتِهِ وَشاهِداً عَلَى أُمَّتِهِ وَدَلالَةً عَلى حُجَّتِهِ وَحامِلاً لِرايَتِهِ وَوِقايَةً لِمُهْجَتِهِ وَهادِياً لِأُمَّتِهِ وَيَداً لِبَأْسِهِ وَتاجاً لِرَأْسِهِ وَبَهاءً لِسِرْبِهِ وَمِفْتاحاً لِظَفَرِهِ.[289]

...Your Prophet's brother and Your Messenger's Executor who slept on his bed, shared his burden with his own soul, and removed grief from his face, whom You made a sword for his prophecy, a sign for his message, a witness for his nation, a token of his proof, his standard-bearer, defense of his life-blood, a guide for his nation, a hand for his ferocity, a crown for his head, a gate for his secrets, and a key to his triumph.

Ḥākim Sanāʾī says:

مرتضائي كه كرد يزدانش همره جان مصطفي جانش
دو رونده چو اختر گردون دو برادر چو موسي و هارون
هر دو يك قبله و خِرَدشان دو هر دو يك روح و كالبدشان دو
هر دو يك دُرّ زيك صَدف بودند هر دو پيرايهٔ شرف بودند
تا نه بگشاد علم حيدر در ندهد سنّت پيمبر بر

He whom his Lord called Murtaḍā
To be Muṣṭafā's soul's beloved
The two together like the whirling star
Like those two brothers: Aaron and Moses,
Both had one *qiblah* but two insights
Their souls were one, but their bodies two.
Both were the same pearl belonging to one shell,
Both were the ornaments of dignity, as well;
Unless Ḥaydar's knowledge opens the loop,
The Prophet's tradition won't yield fruit!

Sayyid Ḥimyarī's Poetry in Praise of Imam Ali

Sayyid Ismāʿīl Ḥimyarī says:

قِفْ بِالدِّيارِ وَحَيِّهِنَّ دِياراً وَاسْقِ الرُّسُومَ المُدْمَعَ المِدْرارا
كانَتْ تَحُلُّ بِها النَّوارُ وَزَيْنَبُ فَرَعى إِلهي زَيْنَباً وَنَوارا

قُلْ لِلَّذى عادى وَصِيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَبانَ لِي عَنْ لَفْظِهِ إِنكارا
مَن عِندَهُ عِلْمُ الكِتابِ وَحُكْمُهُ مَن شاهِدٌ يَتلُوهُ مِنهُ نَذارا
عِلْمُ البَلايا وَالمَنايا عِندَهُ فَصْلُ الخِطابِ نُمي إِليهِ وَصاراً.[290]

1. Stand at the houses and greet them as houses
And with tears from your eyes water those ruined traces.
2. Because those houses were the places of Nawār and Zaynab,
So O my God! Protect Nawār and Zaynab.
3. Tell him who was an enemy to Muhammad's Executor and showed me disapproval for voicing it.
4. Who has all the Knowledge and Law of the Book? Who is a witness following him—a warner?
5. He has knowledge of [future] tribulations and deaths,
Unmistakable judgment is attributed to him and came true!

Sayyid Ḥimyarī also says:

أُشهِدُ بِاللهِ وَآلائِهِ وَالمَرءُ عَمّا قالَهُ يُسألُ
إِنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طالِبٍ خَليفَةُ اللهِ الَّذى يَعدِلُ
وَإِنَّهُ قَدْ كانَ مِن أَحمَد كَمِثْلِ هارُونَ وَلا مُرْسَلُ
لَكِنْ وَصِيٌّ خازِنٌ عِندَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ اللهِ بِهِ يَعمَلُ
قَدْ قامَ يَومَ الدَّوحِ خَيرُ الوَرَى بِوَجْهِهِ لِلنّاسِ يَستَقبِلُ
وَقالَ مَنْ قَدْ كُنتُ مَولىً لَهُ فَذا لَهُ مَولىً لَكُم مَوئِلُ
لَكِنْ تَواصَوا بِعَلِيٍّ الهُدى أَن لا يَوالُوهُ وَأَن يَخذُلوا[291]

1. I testify by God and His blessing,
And man is answerable for what he says;
2. That Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib is God's Caliph who is just
3. And that he was to Ahmad
Like Aaron, just not a messenger.
4. But an executor custodian who has
Knowledge from God upon which he acts
5. The best creature, on the Day of Ghadīr, stood Facing the people
6. Whoever's Master I have been,
This Ali is his Master, a refuge for you.
7. However, they advised each other about Ali,
Not to accept him as Master and to desert him!

Here the Muʿtazilite scholar Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd cannot cover up the light by refraining from mentioning the Imam's status, so he concedes

all the qualities that the Imam shared with the noblest Prophet and the light shining in his face from God's Messenger's light:

هَذَا الأَمَانَةُ لَا يَقُومُ بِحَمْلِهَا خَلْقاءُ هَابِطَةٌ وَأَطْلَسُ ارْفَعُ
هَذَا هُوَ النُّورُ الَّذِي عَذَبَاتُهُ كَانَتْ بِجَبْهَةِ آدَمَ تَتَطَلَّعُ
وَشِهَابُ مُوسَى حَيْثُ اظْلَمَّ لَيْلُهُ رَفَعَتْ لَهُ لالاؤُهُ تَتَشَعْشَعُ

And he continues:

لَوْلَا مَمَاتُكَ قُلْتُ إِنَّكَ بَاسِطُ الأَرْزَاقِ تَقْدِرُ فِي العَطَاءِ وَتُوسِعُ
مَا العَالَمُ البِلْوِيُّ إِلَّا تُرْبَةٌ فِيهَا لِخُثْيَتِكَ الشَّرِيفَةِ مَضْجَعُ
مَا الدَّهْرُ إِلَّا عَبْدُكَ القِنُّ الَّذِي بِنُفُوذِ أَمْرِكَ فِي البَرِيَّةِ مُولَعُ
أَنَا فِي مَدِيحِكَ الكَنُّ لَا اهْتَدِي وَأَنَا الخَطِيبُ الهِبَرْزِيُّ المِصْقَعُ
أَأَقُولُ فِيكَ سَمَيْدَعٌ كَلَّا وَلَا حَاشَا لِمِثْلِكَ أَنْ يُقَالَ سَمَيْدَعُ
بَلْ أَنْتَ فِي يَوْمِ القِيَامَةِ حَاكِمٌ فِي العَالَمِينَ وَشَافِعٌ وَمُشَفَّعُ
وَلَقَدْ جَهِلْتُ وَكُنْتُ أَحْذَقَ عَالِمٍ أَغْرَارُ عَزْمِكَ أَمْ حُسَامُكَ أَقْطَعُ
وَقَعَدْتُ مَعْرِفَتِي فَلَسْتُ بِعَارِفٍ هَلْ فَضْلُ عِلْمِكَ أَمْ جَنَابُكَ أَوْسَعُ
لِي فِيكَ مُعْتَقَدٌ سَأَكْشِفُ سِرَّهُ فَلْيُصْغِ أَرْبَابُ النُّهَى وَلْيَسْمَعُ
هِيَ نَفْثَةُ المَصْدُورِ يُطْفِي بَرْدُهَا حَرَّ الصَّبَابَةِ فَاعْذِلُونِي أَوْ دَعُوا
وَاللهِ لَوْ لَا حَيْدَرٌ مَا كَانَتِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا جَمَعَ البَرِيَّةَ مَجْمَعُ
مِنْ أَجْلِهِ خُلِقَ الزَّمَانُ وَضُوِّئَتْ شُهُبٌ كَسَنَ وَجَنَّ لَيْلٌ أَدْرَعُ
عِلْمُ الغُيُوبِ إِلَيْهِ غَيْرُ مُدَافَعٍ وَالصُّبْحُ أَبْيَضُ مُسْفِرٌ لَا يُدْفَعُ
وَإِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمِ المَعَادِ حِسَابُنَا وَهُوَ المَلَاذُ لَنَا غَداً وَالمَفْزَعُ

(This is just part of this famous ode, known as the *ʿAyniyyah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, published along with the Seven *Muʿallaqāt* (*Poems to Hang Up*).

1. This is the keepsafe that no one can bear: neither the lowly hard rock, nor the Atlantic Firmament.
2. This is the very light, the fair edge of which shone on Adam's forehead
3. And Moses's light, when his night was dark, raising its shining brightness for him.
4. Were it not for your death, I would have said that you are the distributer of provisions, apportioning and amply bestowing bounty.

5. What use is the highest world if not for its soil, a resting place for your holy body?
6. What is time, but your obedient slave, enamored with following your command amongst the creatures?
7. My tongue is unable to praise your lofty position, so I am bewildered, even though I am the stentorian-voiced leonine orator.
8. Should I call you *samayda*ᶜ[292]? No. Never ever! Far be it from the like of you to be called *samayda*ᶜ!
9. Rather you will be a judge of all worlds on the Day of Resurrection, an intercessor whose intercession is accepted.
10. I know not, even though I am the most skillful scholar, whether the edge of your determination or your sword is sharper!
11. I have lost my cognizance, so I am not cognizant! Is the virtue of your knowledge or your courtyard vaster?[293]
12. I have a belief about you, the secret of which I will reveal, so those with understanding should listen carefully.
13. It is the expectoration of the heart (*maṣdūr*), the cold of which extinguishes the heat of ardent love, so reproach me or leave me alone.
14. By God, were it not for Ḥaydar, the world would not exist and the creatures would not assemble.
15. Because of him the world was created, stars were lit and set, and the night that begins darkly and ends brightly fell.
16. He irrefutably has knowledge of unseen things; morning is bright, white, and unstoppable.
17. Reckoning us is up to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he is the shelter and refuge for us.

Lessons Fifty-Seven to Sixty

Commentary on the Verse

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

And those who disbelieve say: "Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord?" You are just a warner and every nation has a guide.

LESSONS FIFTY-SEVEN TO SIXTY

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

Blessing upon Muhammad and his infallible Household and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

And those who disbelieve say: "Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord?" You are just a warner and every nation has a guide. (13:7)

Commentary on the Verse *You are just a warner and every nation has a guide*

Many Sunni and Shi'a hadith books and exegetes cite prophetic hadiths that say that the *guide* in this verse means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. Before plunging into a discussion on these hadiths, we should perform a brief exegesis of the verse. The pagans and the unbelievers from Quraysh kept demanding miracles like those performed by Moses, Jesus, Ṣāliḥ, and the other prophets, such as changing the rod into a serpent, the white hand, quickening the dead, restoring sight to the blind, curing lepers, or bringing a live camel out of a hard mountain. They would say: "If this Prophet is telling the truth, why does he not perform such miracles, and why does God not send such miraculous things down from Heaven to support him?"

They did not accept the Glorious Qur'an, which is the biggest miracle to man. They doubted it, and generally did not take it seriously. They wanted other visible miracles like those of old.

In one way or another, this demand of theirs was wrong.

First of all, the power and authority for miracles is God's alone; that is, God's Messenger did not have the autonomous authority to perform them. Like other creatures, the Prophet of God is subject to God's command and can do nothing without God's permission—whether on his own initiative or as demanded by others. As God says:

ولا يملكون لانفسهم ضرا ولا نفعا ولا يملكون موتا ولا حيوة ولا نشورا.

...and they control not for themselves any harm or profit, and they control not death nor life, nor quickening. (25:3)

Whatever God wills, He can do through His Prophet, whether quickening the dead, changing the rod into a serpent, or revealing the Glorious Qur'an. That is why it is completely wrong to think that the Prophet was able to act autonomously or that he was a partner with regard to [cause and] effect.

Secondly, magic and sorcery had reached their pinnacle in Moses's time, so God saw fit to make Moses's miracle of that kind to challenge his enemies—it would surpass human ability and people would believe in it.

In Jesus's time medicine was so advanced that it could cure serious illness, so God gave Jesus miracles appropriate to that setting, which experts in medicine could not match.

A true miracle must pertain to a skill to which contemporary scholars have dedicated their lives but that they are unable to match, leaving them with no alternative but to concede its superiority—not just something that laypersons cannot do.

In God's Messenger's time the art of eloquence was most advanced. Influential poets composed literary poems. They embellished their writings with different kinds of metaphors, allusions, and analogies while still maintaining brevity and other nuances of Arabic language and style. They would hang them on the walls of the Ka'bah. The seven poems hung on the Ka'bah at the time of Muhammad are examples of these.

Apart from that, men always create new laws and rules for themselves and soon get used to them, but are unaware of their problems and illnesses.

The Glorious Qur'an displays, on the one hand, the highest degree of eloquence, and on the other, the righteousness of the natural laws and rules of humanity brought for mankind in a unique style, based on the Unity of the Creator and the interconnectedness of all people, indeed all entities, and indeed all things created, on the bases of favor and unity.

The inimitability of the Qur'an, and similarly the invitation for all people to God, Who is their Creator, and is closer to them than all things—both depend on the principle of beauty and majesty contained in all God's Names.

More important than all that is the interconnection between all these subjects. Laws, stories of prophets and nations, the motions of the heavens and stars, the alternation of night and day, the earth, the

rain, the clouds, the winds, the growth and freshness of grass and vegetation, the creation of man, the development of the embryo and fetus, death, resurrection, the fruit of deeds, and a reckoning for all creatures—these are all there in a single volume that fits in one's pocket.

Above all, having such highly literary words and magnificent style will ensure it remains God's Messenger's eternal miracle for any future scholars, right up until the Day of Resurrection. It has challenged everyone to devise anything like it, confident of its inimitability. Therefore, if people do not believe in this Qur'an, they will never believe in other miracles either, like those performed by Moses or Jesus.

Thirdly, God has undertaken to send miracles to His prophets to make their connection to God and the hidden world clear and to corroborate their prophethood—He has not sent a new miracle every day to satisfy people's whims. Constant miracles make people mute, inactive, and senseless, take away their wisdom, and interfere with God's custom of training people, instructing them to strive, and leading them to perfection. If people are submissive, and have a tendency to obey, they surrender after a single miracle, but if not, no miracle can persuade them; they even say that they are magic or sorcery. People travel various deviant paths to avoid following their prophets. As the Exalted God says:

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ

If God had noticed any good in them, He would have made them hear, but even if He made them hear, they would still turn away with disdain. (8:23)

Besides that, people are insatiable; they would ask their prophet for a new miracle even if they had received one the previous day, turning the prophet into a toy to satisfy their corrupt demands, instead of a teacher and guide towards God.

The Pagans' Vexatious Request

The Meccan pagans and unbelievers kept asking the Prophet for bizarre miracles such as angels visibly descending, bringing a complete Book down from the heavens, changing stones into gold, making water flow in springs and rivers on the mountain in Mecca, changing their houses into gold, for him to ascend to Heaven, and so on. As God's Messenger did not fulfil their demands, they objected, even though the Qur'an alone provided the solution to every problem:

لولا انزل عليه ءاية من ربه

Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord?

Their excuse was so poor that God left them without an answer. He did not even say anything about it to His Prophet and just addressed him as follows:

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

You are just a warner and every nation has a guide.

The Verse Means That the Earth Will Never Be Left without a Proof

This verse means that the earth will never be left without a proof—an Imam. There will always be a guide or leader appointed by God to direct people to righteousness—the guide may or may not be a prophet, but either way, he is guided by God. Exegetes unanimously agree that the

منذر

(warner) means God's Messenger, because the second person pronoun in

انما انت منذر

refers to him. However, exegetes have given four different explanations for what

هاد

means.

Various Interpretations of *Guide*

One:

هاد

means "God." That is: Prophet, you are only an inviter to God; you warn people of the consequences of their evil deeds, but it is God's to guide; it is He Who guides each group to safety and salvation.

This is the opinion of Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr,[294] Ibn ʿAbbās, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Mujāhid.[295] Suyūṭī says: Ibn Mundhir and Ibn Abī Ḥātam narrate on the authority of Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr:

في قوله تعالى: إنما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد، قال: محمد المنذر والهادي الله عز وجل

"With regard to the Exalted's words: *You are just a warner and every nation has a guide*: Muhammad is the warner and the guide is God.[296]

Even though the true Guide is indeed God, the apparent meaning of the verse that refers to the "guide" as discrete from the Prophet tells

us that what is meant here is the *person* who guides people to God. Interpreting it as "God" is thus not consistent with the apparent meaning of the verse.

Two:

هاد

means the Prophet himself,

لكل قوم

is connected to

هاد

and the latter precedes it; it basically means: "You are just a Warner, and, a guide for every nation." Therefore, the phrase

لكل قوم

is connected to the word

هاد.

This is related from ʿIkrimah, Abū al-Ḍuḥā, Hasan Baṣrī, and Jubbāʾī.[297]

Suyūṭī says:

> Ibn Jarīr relates on the authority of ʿIkrimah and Abū al-Ḍuḥā regarding the Exalted God's words:
>
> انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد
>
> "Muhammad is both the warner and guide."[298]

Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Mardawayh cite similar hadiths on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās.

Although this opinion does not conflict with the literal meaning of the verse, it can be criticized for what it means. Why is the Prophet's being a warner unqualified, but his being a guide qualified by "to every nation"? If God's Messenger is a guide to every nation, he must also be a warner to every nation.

لكل قوم

should be connected both to

منذر

and to

هاد

but in the verse it is only connected to

هاد

Three:

هاد

(guide) means the prophet of any time. The intended meaning is thus: O Prophet you are warning people about God's punishment at this time, and calling their attention to your miracle, the Glorious Qur'an, and guiding them towards it. In every age there are prophets who guide people to God through their miracles, such as changing the rod into a serpent, quickening the dead, bringing a live camel out of a mountain, and presenting the Glorious Qur'an to the people.

Fakhr Rāzī relates this opinion from Qāḍī and says that the verse is consistent with this interpretation, which is correct.[299]

Shaykh Ṭabarsī narrates a hadith on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās, and also narrates it on the authority of Qatādah, Zajjāj, and Ibn Zayd.[300]

Suyūṭī says:

> Ibn Shaybah, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mundhir, Ibn Ḥātim, and also Abū al-Shaykh narrate on the authority of Mujāhid:
>
> انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد، قال: المنذر محمد صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم ولكل قوم هاد نبي يدعوهم الى الله.
>
> "With regard to
>
> انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد
>
> the warner is Muhammad, and every nation has a prophet guide who invites them to God."[301]

This interpretation is not inconsistent with the literal meaning of the verse, but we have to ask why it would say that only the prophets guide people to God. The prophets' executors such as Joshua son of Nūn, Simon Peter, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and all the other holy Imams also guide people to God, because they guide people with God's Light and Guidance.

Four: The word

هاد

(guide) means any guide—either prophet or executor—who guides people to God. In the blessed verse, this can apply both to God's Messenger and to the holy Imams.

This opinion is cited as the fourth possible explanation in *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*. It says:

المراد بالهادی کل داع الی الحق.

"The guide' means anyone who calls [people] to the Truth."[302]

ᶜAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī, may his blessings last forever, endorses this possible explanation.[303]

Suyūṭī says:

> Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and Abū al-Shaykh narrate this on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās, who said:
>
> ولکل قوم هاد، قال: داع
>
> "Every nation has a guide [meaning] an inviter."[304]

In the light of numerous prophetic hadiths, narrated by both sects, which say: "I am the warner and Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib is the guide," the meaning becomes clear, because the warner invites [people] to the Truth. Both guide and warner apply to God's Messenger—guidance is concomitant with both invitation and warning.

Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib was neither a prophet nor inviter. He just guided people to God.

The Meaning of "Guidance" and "Warning"

Before plunging into these hadiths, it is first necessary to explain what "warner" and "guide" mean, so that the Imam's role and task, and the magnitude of his responsibility, become clear.

"Warning" means admonition and awakening people. "Guidance" means steering people towards their destination. The author of *Bayān al-Saᶜādah* says at the end of the exegesis of the blessed verse:

> The Prophet of God is like someone who wakes people up from their sleep and warns them of all the perils in the desert for someone with no road to civilization. There are wild animals, snakes, and other beasts, but those who are asleep are unaware of them. It is only later when they wake up and see the peril of the situation that they look for someone to show them the way, tell them what to do, and rescue them from that terrible predicament; the persons to lead them out of the darkness and into light are the guide and the Imam.[305]

Shaykh Ismāʿīl Ḥaqqī Brūsawī writes in *Sharḥ al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā* that Ghazālī said:

> The Guide is He Who guided His elite servants firstly to knowledge of His Essence so that they could witness things through [His Essence]. He

guided His ordinary servants to His creations so that they would be made witness to His Essence. He guided every creature to what is essential to fulfil its needs. He thus guided the newborn infant how to suckle from its mother, the chick how to peck seeds after hatching, and bees how to build hexagonal combs, because that is the most appropriate shape for their bodies.

Out of the servants, the guides are prophets, then scholars who direct the creatures to happiness in the Hereafter and guide them to God's straight path. In fact, it is God Who guides them, but through their tongues. They are at His disposal and under His power and control.

He then says:

Tafsīr al-Kawālishī says that

منذر

"warner" means Muhammad and

هاد

"guide" means Ali...because the chain continues from both to the end of time. A *mahdī* will emerge among his nation who rules by his religious code (*sharīᶜah*), and eliminates the alteration made by the successors to his nation who strayed and erred.[306]

Hadiths That Say That the Imam Is a Guide

The prophetic hadiths that say that the guide in the blessed verse means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib are numerous and are narrated by both Shiᶜa and Sunni scholars.[307]

Even Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Saᶜd has written a book on the background to the revelation of the verse

انما انت منذر لكل قوم هاد

about the Master of the Faithful.

There are also many exegetical hadiths narrated by senior companions and the Infallible Imams that say that it is exclusively about Ali and the Imams from the Household. We will now divide them into categories by their content and meaning.

One: Hadiths that say that there must be a guide at every time, and that every Imam is that era's guide to God.

Muhammad Ibn Yaᶜqūb Kulaynī narrates via his chain of transmission from Mūsā Ibn Bukayr on the authority of Fuḍayl:

قال سألت اباعبدالله عليه السلام عن قول الله عزوجل: ولكل قوم هاد، فقال: كل امام هاد للقرن الذى هو فيهم[308]

"I asked Abū ᶜAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq] about God's words, Mighty and Sublime is He:

ولكل قوم هاد

[The Imam] replied: "Every Imam is the guide for the generation in which he [lives]."

Muhammad Ibn Yaᶜqūb Kulaynī narrates a similar hadith via his chain of transmission from Ḥammād Ibn ᶜĪsā on the authority of Ḥarīr Ibn ᶜAbdillāh on the authority of [Imam Ṣādiq].[309] Shaykh Ṣadūq (Ibn Bābawayh) Qummī narrates it via his chain of transmission from Muhammad Ibn Muslim on the authority of Imam Ṣādiq[310] and similarly via an unbroken chain from Burayd Ibn Muᶜāwiyah ᶜIjlī, on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir[311] and via another chain from Omar Ibn Udhaynah on the authority of Burayd Ibn Muᶜāwiyah ᶜIjlī on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir. Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm Qummī cites it in his exegesis via his chain of transmission from Imam Ṣādiq.[312] ᶜAyyāshī cites it in his exegesis, via his chain of transmission from Abū Jaᶜfar (Imam Bāqir).[313]

Two: Hadiths that say that

هاد

(*guide*) means the Imams, one after the other. Kulaynī, via his chain of transmission from Burayd Ibn Muᶜāwiyah ᶜIjlī, quotes Imam Muhammad Bāqir as saying:

فى قول الله عزوجل: انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد، قال عليه السلام: رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم المنذر، ولكل زمان منا هاد يهديهم الى ما جاء به نبي الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم ثم الهداة من بعده على ثم الاوصياء واحدا بعد واحد[314]

"With regard to God's words, Mighty and Sublime is He: *You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide* (13:7), God's Messenger is the warner. In every era, there is a guide from us to direct them to what God's Prophet has brought them. The guides after him are Ali, followed by the executors, one after the other."

In *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī cites a similar hadith on the authority of Ḥannān Ibn Sudayr on the authority of his father on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir.

ᶜAyyāshī says in his exegesis on the authority of Burayd Ibn Muᶜāwiyah ᶜIjlī that Imam Muhammad Bāqir said about:

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: انا المنذر، وفي كل زمان امام منا يهديهم الى ما جاء به نبي الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم، والهداة من بعده علي ثم الاوصياء من بعده واحد بعد واحد، والله ما ذهبت منا وما زالت فينا الى الساعة، رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم المنذر وعلى يهتدي المهتدون[315]

"God's Messenger said: 'I am the warner, and in every era there is an Imam from us to guide them to what God's Prophet brought. The guides after him are Ali, followed by the executors, one after the other. By God, it has not left us, and will remain with us until the Hour. God's Messenger is the warner and the guided are guided by Ali.'"

Kulaynī cites a similar hadith, via his chain of transmission from Abū Baṣīr on the authority of Imam Ṣādiq,[316] and Ṣaffār also cites it in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*.[317]

Hadiths That Say That the Guide Is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib

Three: Those that say that

هاد

(*guide*) means Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. Ibrāhīm Ibn Muhammad Ḥamwīnī, a senior Sunni scholar, narrates in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn fī Faḍā'il al-Murtaḍā wa al-Batūl wa al-Sibṭayn*, via his chain of transmission from Imam Abū al-Hasan Ali Ibn Ahmad Wāḥidī, that:

قال: من الآيات فيها على تلو النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم في قوله: انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد.[318]

"One of the verses that say that Ali is the Prophet's successor is:

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

Ḥaskānī cites something similar at the bottom of page 303 of vol. 1 of *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl* on the authority of *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, chapter 28, entry 122.

God's Messenger Explicitly States That the Guide Means Ali

Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib quotes Abū Hurayrah as saying:

قال: سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم عن هذه الآية قال: هادي هذه الامة علي بن أبي طالب

"I asked God's Messenger about this verse, and he replied: 'This nation's guide is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"[319]

Ibn Shahr Āshūb quotes Ibn ᶜAbbās, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Zajjāj as saying:

انما انت منذر، رسول الله «ولكل قوم هاد» علی امیر المؤمنین[320]

"You are just a warner [means] God's Messenger, *and every nation has a guide* [means] Ali, the Master of the Faithful.

He also narrates it on the authority of Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr from Ibn ᶜAbbās via another chain of transmission, and from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā on the authority of Imam Muhammad Bāqir; from Abū Hurayrah, and, on the authority of Saʿīd Ibn Musayyib on the authority of Abū Hurayrah on the authority of God's Messenger via another chain of transmission.[321] Shaykh Ṭabarsī cites words to the same effect on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās, on the authority of God's Messenger.[322] Fayḍ Kāshānī also quotes it from *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān* on the authority of God's Messenger, from *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* by Kulaynī on the authority of Imam Bāqir on the authority of God's Messenger, from *Ikmāl al-Dīn*, *Tafsīr Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm*, and *Tafsīr al-ᶜAyyāshī*. [Fayḍ Kāshānī] also says: "Many Sunni and Shiᶜa narrators relate it via different chains." He quotes Qummī as saying: "It is a response to whoever denies that there is an Imam in every era and that the world is never without a proof."[323]

Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī narrates words to the same effect in *Tafsīr al-Burhān* on the authority of ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā on the authority of Imam Bāqir; from Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh al-Anṣārī on the authority of Imam Bāqir; from Saʿīd Ibn Musayyib, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah on the authority of God's Messenger, and, from Ibn ᶜAbbās, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Zajjāj. He then says: "Words to this effect are widely narrated (*mustafiḍah*) by both Sunnis and Shiᶜa on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās, but the book would become prolix if they were all cited." He says: "Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: 'Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Saʿīd has written a book on the revelation of [this verse] about the Master of the Faithful.'"[324]

Suyūṭī says: "Ibn Mardawayh and Ḍiyāʾ in *al-Mukhtārah* narrate words to the same effect on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās on the authority of God's Messenger.[325]

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī also narrates it on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās on the authority of God's Messenger; and on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās in another hadith;[326] from Abū Hurayrah from God's Messenger, from Abū Barzah Aslamī from God's Messenger; via his chain of transmission from Omar Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Ibn Yaᶜlā Ibn Murrah from his father from God's Messenger, and, via his chain from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Mujāhid from his father.[327]

ᶜAyyāshi narrates in his exegesis on the authority of Masᶜadah Ibn Ṣadaqah, from Jaᶜfar Ibn Muhammad from his father from his grandfather:

قال امیر المؤمنین علیه السّلام: فینا نزلت هذه الآیة: انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد. قال رسول الله صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم: انا المنذر وانت الهادی، یا علی فمنا الهادی والنجاة والسعادة الی یوم القیامة.

"Imam Ali said: 'This verse was revealed about us: *You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide.* God's Messenger said: "I am the warner, and you are the guide. Ali! The guide, salvation, and happiness will come from us until the Day of Resurrection."'"[328]

ᶜAyyāshī narrates on the authority of Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh that Imam Bāqir said:

قال النبی صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم: انا المنذر وعلی الهادی الی امری.

"The Prophet said: 'I am the warner and Ali is the guide to my command.'"[329]

Sayyid Baḥrānī narrates this hadith by other chains from Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh.[330] In *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, Ṣaffār narrates words to the same effect via his chain from Ibn Burayd via an unbroken chain from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā from Imam Bāqir; via another chain, from Muhammad Ibn al-Husayn from ᶜAmr Ibn Othman from Mufaḍḍal, from Jābir from Imam Bāqir; via a third chain from Ali Ibn al-Husayn; via his chain from Marwān Ibn Najm from Imam Bāqir, and, via a fourth chain from Ahmad Ibn Muhammad, from Husayn, from Muhammad Ibn Khālid from Ayyūb Ibn Ḥurr from Imam Bāqir.[331] Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm also narrates it in his exegesis, from Husayn Ibn Ḥakam, via his chain from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn ᶜAṭā from Imam Bāqir.[332]

In his exegesis, Ali Ibn Ibrāhīm narrates it from his father, from Yaḥyā Ibn Abī ᶜImrān, from Yūnus, from Saᶜdān Ibn Muslim, from Abū Baṣīr from Imam Ṣādiq within the exegesis of:

ذلك الكتب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين

That Book in which there is no doubt, guidance for the God-fearing (2:2): "The Book [in which there is no doubt] means Ali. There is no doubt in him, *guidance for the God-fearing*—perspicuity for our followers (*shīᶜatinā*)."[333]

In *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* Kulaynī narrates via his chain from ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm Qaṣīr that Imam Bāqir said by way of exegesis of the verse:

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

"God's Messenger is the warner and Ali is the guide. By God, it has not left us, and, will remain with us until the Hour."[334]

Hadiths on the Authority of Ali That Say That He Is the Guide

Four: Hadiths narrated from the Master of the Faithful himself that say: "I am the guide" in this noble verse. Blessed Ṣadūq narrates in *al-Amālī* on the authority of Ṭāliqānī via his unbroken chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh:

قال: قال علی علیه السّلام: ما نزلت من القرآن آیة الا وقد علمت این نزلت وفیمن نزلت وفی ای شیء نزلت، وفی سهل نزلت ام فی جبل نزلت قیل: فما انزلت فیك؟

فقال: لولا انکم سألتمونی ما اخبرتکم، نزلت فی الآیة انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد فرسول الله المنذر وانا الهادی الی ما جاء به.

Ali said: "Not a single verse of the Qur'an was revealed without my knowing where it was revealed, about whom it was revealed, about what it was revealed, whether it was revealed on flat land or on a mountain."[335]

He was asked: "So what was revealed about you?"

He replied: "If you had not asked me, I would not have told you. The verse:

انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد

was revealed about me. God's Messenger is the warner, and I am the guide to what he brought."

Fārsī narrates in *al-Rawḍah*:

قال علی علیه السّلام: انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد،

«منذر» محمد و«لکل قوم هاد» انا[336]

"Ali said: '*You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide. Warner* means Muhammad and *every nation has a guide* means me.'"

Suyūṭī says:

Cited by ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ahmad, in *Zawā'id al-Musnad*, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ṭabarānī in *al-Awṣaṭ*, by Ḥākim, Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn ᶜAsākir and considered to be authentic by Ḥākim: Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib said about:

انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد

You are just a warner and every nation has a guide (13:7):

قال: رسول الله صلی الله علیه وآله وسلم المنذر وانا الهادی.

وفی لفظ: والهادی رجل من بنی هاشم یعنی نفسه

"God's Messenger is the warner and I am the guide."[337]

One version says: "And the guide is a Hāshimite man," meaning himself.

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates a similar hadith to the one in *al-Amālī*, via an unbroken chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh. It says at the end:

فرسول الله المنذر وانا الهادی الی ما جاء به[338]

"So God's Messenger is the warner and I am the guide to what he brought."

The footnote of *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 300 says:

> In *Muᶜjam al-Shuyūkh*, vol. 2, p. 120, and in another edition, p. 203, Ibn al-ᶜArabī says:
>
> > Abū Saʿīd Ḥārithī cites on the authority of ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh:
> >
> > Regarding the verse:
> >
> > انما انت منذر ولکل قوم هاد
> >
> > قال علی: رسول الله المنذر وانا الهادی
> >
> > Ali said: "God's Messenger is the warner and I am the guide."
>
> He then says: "Ibn ᶜAsākir cites this hadith in *Tārikh Dimashq* (*The History of Damascus*), in the biographical entry on Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, under the heading "Hadith 914" from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh.

It is cited in *Muntakhab Kanz al-ᶜUmmāl*, published in the margin of *Musnad Aḥmad* (vol. 1, p. 451), at the beginning of the exegesis of Sūrat al-Raᶜd, on the authority of Ibn Abī Ḥātim, by Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (vol. 3, p. 129, hadith 77), via his unbroken chain from ᶜAbbād Ibn ᶜAbdillāh Asadī, on the authority of Ali. Ḥākim then says: "All the chains of transmission of this *hadith* are authentic." After explaining this hadith, Shaykh Muhammad Bāqir Maḥmūdī says:

> Here, the sickness of open hostility (to the Prophet's Family) drives Dhahabī wild, the grip is tightened around his throat, and he takes leave of his senses and stops talking rationally. He says in his abridgment of *al-Mustadrak*:
>
> > This hadith is a lie.

قبح الله واضعه!

May God make its forger repugnant!

However, after understanding everything said above, he says candidly,

This [hadith] is true:

قبح الله منكره وجاحد مزايا اهل البيت ومن يتكلم فى العلم بالجهل.

May God make repugnant whoever denies it, rejects the Household's distinctions. and speaks ignorantly about knowledge.'

He then says that this hadith is narrated in *Kanz al-ᶜUmmāl* (vol. 1, p. 251). He says that Ibn Abī Ḥātim cites it.

Hadiths That Allude to Imam Ali's Being the Guide

Five: Hadiths in which Ali says "The Guide" in that verse means a Hāshimite man. He means himself. Examples are hadiths cited by Suyūṭī, who says:

Cited by ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal in *Zawā'id al-Musnad*, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*, Ḥākim who treats it as authentic by including it in *al-Mustadrak*, Ibn Mardawayh, and Ibn ᶜAsākir. They all say:

رجل من بنى هاشم

"A man from among the Hāshimites," instead.[339]

In his exegesis, Thaᶜlabī narrates on the authority of Saddī from ᶜAbd Khayr, from Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib:

المنذر النبى صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم والهادى رجل من بنى هاشم-يعنى نفسه

"The warner is the Prophet, and the guide is a Hāshimite man," meaning himself.[340]

Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuᶜaym Iṣfahānī also narrates via this chain from ᶜAbd Khayr, from Saᶜīd Ibn Jubayr from Ibn ᶜAbbās that:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: انا المنذر والهادى رجل من بنى هاشم.[341]

"God's Messenger said: 'I am the warner and the guide is a Hāshimite man.'"

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates this same hadith from Abū al-Hasan al-Najjār al-Ṭayrānī, via his chain from ᶜAbd Khayr, from Ali.[342] He cites

it via another chain on the authority of Abū ᶜAbdillāh, from Othman Ibn Abī Shaybah,[343] and via a third chain from ᶜAbdullāh Thaqafī from ᶜAbd Khayr from the Master of the Faithful.[344]

In his commentary on *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl* (vol. 1, p. 299), he writes: "ᶜIbn Asākir cites this hadith via this chain from Imam Ali in *Tārikh Dimashq*. He says that in *Majmaᶜ al-Zawāʾid* (vol. 7, p. 41) ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal and Ṭabarānī explicitly confirm the reliability of the narrators of this hadith. Suyūṭī cites it in *al-Ṣaghīr* and *al-Awṣaṭ*, quoting Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn ᶜAsākir."

The Prophet Performs Ablutions and Then Explains That He Is the Warner and That Imam Ali Is the Guide

Six: Numerous hadiths that say that the Prophet asked for water to perform ablutions. Then, after performing ablutions, he took Ali's hand, put it on his own chest, and said [to himself]:

انت المنذر

"You are the warner." He then put Ali's hand on [Ali's] chest and said:

ولكل قوم هاد

"And every nation has a guide."

These differently worded hadiths all tell the same story about the Prophet.

In *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ṣaffār, via his chain, narrates that Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī said:

> I heard Abū Jaᶜfar [Imam Bāqir] say:
>
> دعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم بوضوء طهر فلما فرغ اخذ يد علي صلى الله عليهما فالزمها يده ثم قال: «انما انت منذر» ثم ضم يده الى صدره وقال: «ولكل قوم هاد». ثم قال: يا علي انت اصل الدين ومنار الايمان وغاية الهدى وقائد الغر المحجلين اشهد لك بذلك.[345]
>
> God's Messenger asked for pure water to perform ablutions. When he had finished, he took Ali's hand, held it to his [own] hand and said:
>
> انما انت منذر
>
> *"You are just a warner."* He then put [Ali's] hand on [Ali's] chest and said:
>
> ولكل قوم هاد
>
> *"And every nation has a guide."*

He then stated: "Ali, you are the foundation of the religion, the lighthouse of belief, the epitome of guidance, and the leader of the bright-faced, white-footed. I testify that to you."

Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm narrates this hadith from Abū Ḥamzah from Imam Bāqir.[346]

Suyūṭī says:

Cited by Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mardawayh, Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī in *Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, Daylamī, Ibn ʿAsākir, and Ibn al-Najjār:

لما نزلت انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد وضع رسول الله يده على صدره فقال: انا المنذر، وأومأ بيده الى منكب علي رضي الله عنه فقال: انت الهادي، يا علي بك يهتدي المهتدون[347]

"When *You are just a warner and every nation has a guide* was revealed, God's Messenger put his hand on his chest and said: 'I am the warner.' He pointed to Ali's shoulder and said: 'You are the guide, Ali. Those who are guided are guided by you.'"

Thaʿlabī cites it in his exegesis on the authority of ʿAṭā Ibn Sāʾib narrating from Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr from Ibn ʿAbbās.[348]

Ṭabarī also narrates the same hadith in his exegesis (vol. 13, p. 108) via the same chain of transmission from Ibn ʿAbbās.[349]

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates it via four different chains from ʿAṭā Ibn Sāʾib on the authority of Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās.[350]

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates from Abū al-Hasan al-Fārsī via his chair from Abū Farwah Sulamī:

قال: دعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم بالطهور وعنده علي بن أبي طالب فأخذ رسول الله يد علي بعد ما تطهر فألزقها بصدره ثم قال: «انما انت منذر» ثم ردها الى صدر علي ثم قال: «ولكل قوم هاد». ثم قال: انك منار الانام وغاية الهدى وامير القراء، اشهد على ذلك انك كذلك.

God's Messenger called for water to perform ablutions. Ali was with him. God's Messenger then took Ali's hand after performing ablutions and held it to his [own] chest. He then said: "*You are just a warner.*" He then put [Ali's hand] back on Ali's chest and said: "*And every nation has a guide.*" He then said: "You are the lighthouse for mankind, the epitome of guidance, and the master of reciters. I testify to that—that you are so."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb cites this hadith on the authority of Ḥākim but says that the narrator is Abū Barzah, and says

الصقها

instead of

فالزقها.

He also cites the ending as follows:

انك منار الانام وغاية الهدى وامير القرآن، اشهد على ذلك انك كذلك[351]

"You are the lighthouse for mankind, the epitome of guidance, and the master of the Qur'an. I testify to that—that you are so."

Abu al-Futūḥ Rāzī also cites this hadith but says that the narrator is Abū Burdah Aslamī. Instead of

فالزقها

he says

فالزمها

and narrates the ending as follows:

انك منارة الانام وغاية الهدى وامير القرى، اشهد على ذلك انك كذلك[352]

"You are the lighthouse of mankind, the epitome of guidance, and the master of the townships. I testify to that—that you are so."

In *Ghāyat al-Marām* and *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī also cites it on the authority of Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, but says

الصقها

instead of

فالزقها

in both. He quotes the same ending as Ḥaskānī does with just one exception—in *Ghāyat al-Marām*, he says

امير الغزآ

(master of warriors) instead of

امير القراء .

According to *Ghāyat al-Marām*, the narrator is Abū Burdah al-Aslamī, but *Tafsīr al-Burhān* says Abū Buraydah. In *al-Mustadrak*, Ḥākim cites this hadith exactly as Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī does on the authority of Ḥākim Ḥaskānī in *Tafsīr al-Burhān*.[353] The author of *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah* also cites it on the authority of Ḥākim Ḥaskānī (p. 99, chapter 26), but according to [Qundūzī Ḥanafi], the narrator is Buraydah Aslamī. He also says

فالصق بد

instead of

فالزقها

and narrates the ending as:

فقال: انت لكل قوم هاد ثم قال له: انت مناد الانام وغاية الهدى وامير الغر المحجلين، اشهد على ذلك انك كذلك.

"He then said: 'You are a guide for every nation.' He then told him: 'You are the caller to mankind, the epitome of guidance, and the master of the bright-faced, white-footed. I testify to that—that you are so.'"

[Qundūzī Ḥanafī] then says: "Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī quotes this same hadith from *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*, on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās.

Suyūṭī says:

Ibn Mardawayh quotes Abū Barzah al-Aslamī as saying:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم يقول: «انما انت منذر» ووضع يده على صدر نفسه، ثم وضعها على صدر علي ويقول: «لكل قوم هاد»[354]

"I heard God's Messenger say: '*You are just a warner...*' He put his hand on his own chest, then put it on Ali's chest and said: '*And every nation has a guide.*'"

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī cites this version of the hadith via two chains from Abū Barzah.[355] Sayyid Baḥrānī quotes it from Ibrāhīm Ḥamwīnī's *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn* via his chain from Abū Hurayrah Aslamī,[356] and, from Thaᶜlabī's exegesis, via his chain from Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr from Ibn ᶜAbbās. Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:[357] "Ḥākim Ḥaskānī in *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, and Marzabānī in his book on verses revealed about Ali, say that Abū Barzah narrated the above hadith."[358]

Hadiths about God's Messenger's Ascension That Say That *the Guide* Means Imam Ali

Seven: Hadiths about the Greatest Messenger's Ascension that say that the nation's guide is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. Majlisī narrates from *Tafsīr Furāt Ibn Ibrāhīm* that Barāʾ Ibn ᶜĪsā Tamīmī quoted Imam Abī Jaᶜfar as saying:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: لما اسري بي الى السماء لم يكن بيني وبين ربي ملك مقرب ولا نبي مرسل، ما سألت ربي حاجة الا اعطاني خيرا منها فوقع في مسامعي «انما انت منذر

ولكل قوم هاد، قلت: الهي انا المنذر فمن الهادي؟ قال الله: يا محمد ذاك علي بن أبي طالب، آية المهتدين وامام المتقين وقائد الغر المحجلين من امتك برحمتي الى الجنة

God's Messenger said:

> When I was taken on the night journey to Heaven, there was not a single favored angel or messenger prophet between me and my Lord. I did not ask my Lord for anything without His giving me something better. Thereafter
>
> انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد
>
> *You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide* sounded in my ears, so I asked: "My Lord, I am the warner, but who is the guide?"
>
> God said: "O Muhammad, that is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib. He is the sign for the guided, the Imam of the God-fearing, and the leader of the bright-faced, white-footed from your nation to Heaven, through My mercy."[359]

Ḥākim narrates via his chain from Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr, from Ibn ʿAbbās:

قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: ليلة اسري بي ما سألت ربي شيئا الا اعطانيه [و] سمعت منادیا من خلفي يقول: يا محمد «انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد». قلت: انا المنذر فمن الهادي؟ قال: علي الهادي المهتدي القائد امتك الى جنتي غراء محجلين برحمتي[360]

God's Messenger said:

> On the night when I was taken on the journey, I did not ask my Lord for a single thing that He did not give me. I heard someone call from behind me:
>
> "O Muhammad, *You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide*." I asked: "I am the warner but who is the guide?"
>
> He stated: "Ali is the [rightly] guided guide—the leader of your nation, bright-faced and white-footed, to My Heaven by My mercy."

Here, Abū Nuʿaym Iṣfahānī narrates from Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān via three different chains:

قال: قال النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: ان تستخلفوا عليا ـ وما اراكم فاعلين ـ تجدوه هاديا مهديا يحملكم على المحجة البيضاء

"The Prophet said: 'If you appoint Ali as Caliph—and I don't think you will—you will find him to be a [rightly] guided guide who carries you along the white path.'"[361]

Abū al-Futūḥ narrates this hadith in his exegesis and then says:

> Here is an allusion, and in that allusion are glad tidings for you, namely that God's Messenger called Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib a guide and [rightly] guided (*mahdī*), because we know according to the verse of
>
> ولكل قوم هاد
>
> that the first Imam is a guide (*hādin*) and that the last one is [rightly] guided (*al-mahdī*), so your salvation is inevitable because God's Messenger said:
>
> لن تهلك الرعية وان كانت ظالمة مسيئة اذا كانت الولاة هادية مهدية.
>
> "The flock will not be doomed even if they are sinful wrongdoers provided those in charge are [rightly] guided guides."
>
> Can you not see how wonderful what the poet said is?
>
> تَلْقَى الاَمَانَ عَلَى حِيَاضِ مُحَمَّدٍ نُوْلاءُ مُخْرِفَةٌ وَذِئْبٌ اَطْلَسُ
>
> لاذِي يَخَافُ وَلا لِذَلِكَ جُرْأةٌ يَهْدِي الرَّعِيَّةَ مَا اسْتَقَامَ الرَّئِيسُ[362]
>
> You will find security flowing from Muhammad. A spring lamb and a blackish wolf
>
> Neither the former fears nor the latter dares. The flock is guided as long as the leader is righteous.

(These two couplets are by Kumayt, poet to the Household. He bemoans the others' usurping the rights of Muhammad's offspring and alludes to the reappearance of the Implementer [of God's command] from Muhammad's family during a time when justice will spread its wings all over the world. A sheep will not fear a wolf, and a wolf will not attack a sheep.)

Similarly, we see Zarqā' the Kūfan speak candidly about Imam Ali's justice before Muʿāwiyah Ibn Abī Sufyān, relying on the verse

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

as evidence.

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī narrates via his chain from ʿAbdullāh Ibn ʿĀmir:

اُزعِجَتِ الزَّرقاءُ الكُوفِيَّةُ إلَى مُعاوِيَةَ فَلَمّا دَخَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ قالَ لَها مُعاوِيَةُ: ما تَقُولِينَ فِي مَوْلَى المُؤمِنِينَ عَلِيٍّ؟ فَأنْشَأتْ تَقُولُ:

صَلَّى الإلَهُ عَلَى قَبرٍ تَضَمَّنَهُ نُوراً فَأصْبَحَ فِيهِ العَدْلُ مَدْفُوناً
مَن حالَفَ العَدْلَ وَالإيمانَ مُفْتَرِناً فَصارَ بِالعَدلِ وَالإيمانِ مَقْرُوناً

قالَ لَها مُعاوِيَةُ: كَيْفَ غَرَرْتِ فِيهِ هَذِهِ الغَرِيرَةَ؟ قالَتْ: سَمِعْتُ اللهَ يَقُولُ فِي كِتابِهِ لِنَبِيِّهِ: «إنَّما أنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هادٍ» المُنذِرُ رَسُولُ اللهِ وَالهادِي عَلِيٌّ وَلِيُّ اللهِ[363].

Zarqāʾ the Kūfan was taken to Muʿāwiyah, and when she was in his presence, Muʿāwiyah asked: "What do you think about Ali, the Master of the Faithful?" So she elegized:

> May God bless the grave covered
> With light, so justice became buried therein;
> He who allied with justice, belief bound fast
> Then became linked to justice and belief!

Muʿāwiyah asked her: "How can you say such a childish thing about him?"

Zarqāʾ answered:

> I heard God say in His Book to His Prophet:
>
> انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد
>
> *You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide*. The warner is God's Messenger, and the guide is Ali, God's Friend.

Thus, when Qays Ibn Saʿd Ibn ʿUbādah confronted Muʿāwiyah in Medina after Imam Hasan's martyrdom, and a fierce argument broke out between the two, Qays Ibn Saʿd Ibn ʿUbādah relied on the verse

انما انت منذر ولكل قوم هاد

as evidence of the Master of the Faithful's status.[364]

The Need to Follow a Living Imam; Hadiths That Say That the Word "Guide" Applies to All the Other Imams as Well as to Imam Ali

Eight: Hadiths that say that

هاد

does not just mean the Master of the Faithful, but rather all the infallible Imams, one after the other. These hadiths fall into two categories:

i) Hadiths that say that the Glorious Qur'an was not revealed exclusively about any particular person. If it were so, then the Qur'an would die with that person. Because the Qur'an is everlasting, there must always be something living to which its verses apply.

Sayyid Baḥrānī and Majlisī narrate on the authority of *Tafsīr al-ᶜAyyāshī* that ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm Qaṣīr said:

قَالَ: كُنتُ يَوماً بَينَ الايَامِ عِندَ أَبِي جعفرٍ عليه السّلام فَقَالَ: يا عَبدَ الرَّحيم، قُلتُ: لَبَّيكَ، قالَ: قَولُهُ «إِنَّما أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَومٍ هَادٍ» قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عليهِ وَآلِهِ وَسلَّم: اَنَا المُنذِرُ وَعَلِيٌّ الهادي، مَنِ الهادي إِلى اليَومِ؟

فَسَكَتُّ طَويلاً ثُمَّ رَفَعتُ رَأسي فَقُلتُ: جُعِلتُ فِداكَ هِيَ فِيكُم تَوارَثُوها رَجُلٌ فَرَجُلٌ حَتّى انتَهَت إِلَيكَ فَأَنتَ جُعِلتُ فِداكَ الهادي. قالَ: صَدَقتَ يا عَبدَ الرَّحيمِ إِنَّ القُرآنَ لا يَموتُ وَالآيَةُ حَيَّةٌ لا تَمُوتُ فَلَو كانَتِ الآيَةُ فِي الاقوامِ ماتُوا فَماتَ القُرآنُ وَلَكِن هِيَ جارِيَةٌ فِي الباقِينَ كَما جَرَت فِي الماضِينَ. وَقالَ عَبدُ الرَّحيمِ: قالَ أَبو عَبدِاللهِ عليه السّلام: إِنَّ القُرآنَ حَيٌّ لَم يَمُت وَإِنَّهُ يَجرِي كَما يَجرِي اللَّيلُ وَالنَّهارُ وَكَما يَجرِي الشَّمسُ وَالقَمَرُ وَيَجرِي عَلى آخِرِنا كَما يَجرِي عَلى أَوَّلِنا[365]

One day, I was in the presence of Abū Jaᶜfar [Imam Muhammad Bāqir] and he said: "O ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm!" I replied: "At your service."

He said: "God's Messenger said about God's words '*You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide*: I am the warner and Ali is the guide.' Who has been the guide to this day?"

I remained silent for a long time, and then raised my head and replied: "May I be made your sacrifice, it is about you. You inherited it from each other, man after man, until it reached you. So you, may I be made your sacrifice, are the guide."

[The Imam] said: "You have spoken the truth, ʿAbd al-Raḥīm; the Qurʾan never dies. The verse is living and never dies. If a verse were about nations who have died, then the Qurʾan would die. However, it applies to those remaining just as it applies to those who are gone."

ʿAbd al-Raḥīm said: "Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq] said: 'The Qurʾan is living and will never die. It will flow as night and day flow and as the sun and the moon flow over the last of us as it flows over the first of us.'"

Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī narrates in *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* via his chain from Abū Baṣīr:

قَالَ: قُلتُ لِأَبِي عَبدِاللهِ عليه السلام: «إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَومٍ هَادٍ» قَالَ: رَسُولُ اللهِ المُنذِرُ وَعَلِيٌّ الهَادِي. يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ هَل مِن هَادٍ اليَومَ؟ قُلتُ: بَلَى جُعِلتُ فِدَاكَ مَا زَالَ مِنكُم هَادٍ بَعدَ هَادٍ حَتَّى دُفِعَت إِلَيكَ. قَالَ: رَحِمَكَ اللهُ يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ لَو كَانَت إِذَا نَزَلَت آيَةٌ عَلَى رَجُلٍ ثُمَّ مَاتَ ذَلِكَ الرَّجُلُ مَاتَ الكِتَابُ، وَلَكِنَّهُ حَيٌّ يَجرِي فِيمَن بَقِيَ كَمَا جَرَى فِيمَن مَضَى[366]

I said to Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq]: "*You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide,*" and so he said: "God's Messenger is the warner, and Ali is the guide. Abū Muhammad, is there a guide today?" I said, "May I be made your sacrifice. One of you has always been a guide until it passed to you."

He replied: "O Abū Muhammad, may God have mercy upon you, if a verse had been revealed about a [particular] man and that man subsequently died, the verse would also have died. The Book would die. However, it applies to those who remain just as it applied to whoever is gone."

ii) Hadiths that apply the word *guide* directly to the holy Imams without explaining that the verse's applicability to them is an example of the Qurʾan's continuing relevance and applicability or explaining that the Qurʾan is a living Book.

Abū al-Hasan Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Shādhān the jurisprudent narrates from the Sunnis via his chain from ʿAbdullāh Ibn Omar:

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وآله وسلم: بِيَ أُنذِرتُم وَبِعَلِيِّ بنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ اهتَدَيتُم. وَقَرَأَ: «إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَومٍ هَادٍ». وَبِالحَسَنِ أُعطِيتُمُ الإِحسَانَ وَبِالحُسَينِ تُسعَدُونَ وَبِهِ تُشفَونَ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ الحُسَينَ بَابٌ مِن أَبوَابِ الجَنَّةِ مَن عَانَدَهُ حَرَّمَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ رِيحَ الجَنَّةِ[367].

God's Messenger said: "You have been warned by me and guided by Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib."

He recited: "*You are just a warner and every nation has a guide.* Because of Hasan you have been given kindness (*iḥsān*), and through Husayn you will become prosperous or wretched. Lo, Husayn surely is one of Heaven's gates. God will deprive whoever stubbornly opposes him of Heaven's scent."

ᶜAyyāshī narrates on the authority of Masᶜadah Ibn Ṣadaqah from Imam Jaᶜfar Ṣādiq, from his father, from his grandfather:

قَالَ: قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: فِينَا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ «إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ». فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنَا الْمُنْذِرُ وَأَنْتَ الْهَادِي يَا عَلِيُّ فَبِنَا الْهَادِي وَالنَّجَاةُ وَالسَّعَادَةُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ[368]

"Imam Ali said: 'The verse, *You are just a warner and every nation has a guide* was revealed about us. God's Messenger said: 'I am the warner, and you, Ali, are the guide. The guide, salvation, and prosperity will come from us until the Day of Resurrection.'"

The Prophet Refers to All Twelve Imams by Name

Shaykh Ṣadūq Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Bābawayh Qummī narrates via his chain from Husayn Ibn Yazīd Ibn ᶜAbd ᶜAlī from ᶜAbdullāh Ibn al-Hasan from his father from Imam Hasan that one day, the Prophet delivered a sermon. He said after praising and glorifying God:

> O people! It is as if I am being called and will have to answer.
>
> وَإِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، أَمَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا، فَتَعَلَّمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تُعَلِّمُوهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ مِنْكُمْ. لَا تَخْلُو الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ خَلَتْ لَسَاخَتْ بِأَهْلِهَا.
>
> I am leaving two precious things among you: God's Book and my close family, my Household. Lo, if you cling to them both, you will never go astray. So learn from them and do not try teaching them, because they know better than you. The earth will never be without them. If it were, it would swallow up its inhabitants.

He then said:

اللهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الْعِلْمَ لَا يَبِيدُ وَلَا يَنْقَطِعُ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِي الْأَرْضَ مِنْ حُجَّةٍ لَكَ عَلَى خَلْقِكَ ظَاهِرٍ لَيْسَ بِالْمُطَاعِ أَوْ خَائِفٍ مَغْمُورٍ كَيْلَا تَبْطُلَ حُجَّتُكَ وَلَا تَضِلَّ أَوْلِيَاؤُكَ بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ الْأَقَلُّونَ عَدَداً الْأَعْظَمُونَ قَدْراً عِنْدَ اللهِ

O God! I know that knowledge never dies and never stops, and that You will never leave the earth without a proof of You for Your creation—visible but not obeyed or fearful and hidden so that Your proof is not invalidated and Your Friends do not stray after You have guided them. They are the fewest in number but of the greatest value to God!

When he descended from his pulpit I asked him: "God's Messenger, are you not the proof for all creation?"

He said:

O Hasan, God says:

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ فَأَنَا الْمُنْذِرُ وَعَلِيٌّ الْهَادِي

"*You are just a warner, and every nation has a guide.*" I am the warner, and Ali is the guide.

I said: "God's Messenger, you said that the earth will never be without a proof."

He replied:

Yes, Ali is the Imam and proof after me, and you are the proof and the Imam after him. Husayn is the Imam, proof and successor (*khalifah*) after you. The Subtle, the Aware informed me that a son called Ali, named after his grandfather will issue from Husayn. When Husayn passes away, his son Ali will take charge and be the Imam and proof after his father.

God will cause to issue from Ali's loins a son who will be my namesake, and resemble me more closely than anyone else. His knowledge is my knowledge, and his command is my command. He will be the Imam and proof after his father. The Exalted God will cause to issue from Muhammad's loins a son called Jaʿfar, the most honest in word and deed. He will be the Imam and proof after his father.

The Exalted God will cause to issue from Jaʿfar's loins a son called Mūsā, Moses son of ʿImrān's namesake; he will worship more than anyone else and will be the Imam and proof after his father. God will cause to issue from

Mūsā's loins a son called Ali, the repository of God's knowledge and depository of His wisdom. He will be the Imam and proof after his father. God will cause to issue from Ali's loins a son called Muhammad. He will be the Imam and proof after his father.

God will cause to issue from Muhammad's loins a son called Ali. He will be the Imam and proof after his father.

God will cause to issue from Ali's loins a son called Hasan. He will be the Imam and proof after his father. God will cause to issue from Hasan's loins the proof, the implementer of God's command, the Imam for his followers (*shiᶜatihi*) and the savior of his friends. He will be absent, hence unseen. One group will desert him, but others will remain firm and say: *When is this appointed time if you are truthful?* (10:48; 21:38; 27:71; 34:29; 36:48; 67:25)

وَلَوْلَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ الدُّنيا إلّا يَوْمٌ واحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ ذٰلِكَ اليَوْمَ حَتّٰى يَخْرُجَ قائِمُنا فَيَمْلأُ الارضَ قِسْطاً وَعَدلاً كَما مُلِئَتْ ظُلماً وَجَوراً، فَلا تَخْلُوا الارضُ مِنكُمْ، أعطاكُمُ اللهُ عِلمي وَفَهْمي، وَلَقَدْ دَعَوْتُ اللهَ تَبارَكَ وَتَعالىٰ أن يَجْعَلَ العِلْمَ وَالفِقْهَ في عَقِبي وَعَقِبِ عَقِبي وَفي زَرْعي وَذَرْعِ زَرْعي.[369]

If nothing were left of the world except a single day, God, Mighty and Sublime is He, would prolong that day until our implementer reappears to fill the world with equity and justice just as it was filled with inequity and injustice. So the world will not be without you. God gave you my knowledge and understanding. I prayed to the Blessed Exalted God to give my children and children's children and my seed and my seed's seed knowledge and understanding.

This prophetic hadith includes many points, each of which deserves close scrutiny.

One: Explanation of the *two precious things*: the Qur'an and the Household clinging to both of which God's Messenger considers to be protection from going astray. This hadith is related by so many different chains as to be indubitable (*mutawātir*)—by more than 30 of the Prophet's companions. This is quite apart from senior Shiᶜa scholars and their reliable works, because it is narrated by more than 200 senior Sunni scholars with various wordings.[370] It appears in more than 500 of their reliable books.[371]

Ayatollah ᶜAllāmah Mīr Ḥamīd Husayn Lucknowī Hindī Nīshābūrī, may God be pleased with him, devotes the entire twelfth volume of *ᶜAbaqāt al-Anwār* to a discussion on this hadith, half of which is a discussion on the hadith's chain of transmission, and half of which is a discussion on its meaning.

Mīrzā Najm al-Dīn Sharīf ᶜAskarī wrote a whole book on it and the Ark Hadith in Sunni sources. The title is: *Muḥammad wa ᶜAlī wa Ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn wa Ḥadīth al-Safīnah* (*Muhammad and Ali: The Two*

Precious Things Hadith and the Ark Hadith). God willing, we shall discuss this hadith in detail.

The Imamate Is Exclusive to Muhammad's Family, Who Are the Most Learned

Two: The Prophet says: "Do not try to teach them anything, because they know better than you":

لا تعلّموهم فإنّهم أعلم منكم

as narrated by many Shi'a and Sunni scholars on the authority of the Prophet. We cite it on the authority of Jābir Ibn ʿAbdillāh Anṣārī (*Knowing the Imams* vol. 3).

The infallible Imams' Imamate and leadership can be inferred from this when put together with what Imam Hasan narrates:

وَقَدْ سَمِعَتْ هَذِهِ الأُمَّةُ جَدِّي صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وآله وسلم يَقُولُ: مَا وَلَّتْ أُمَّةٌ أَمْرَهَا رَجُلًا وَفِيهِمْ مَنْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا لَمْ يَزَلْ يَذْهَبُ أَمْرُهُمْ سَفَالًا حَتَّى يَرْجِعُوا إِلَى مَا تَرَكُوهُ[372]

"Indeed, this nation heard my grandfather say: 'No nation has ever put a man in charge when there is someone more knowledgeable among them, without their affair taking a downward turn, until they turn back to what they had forsaken.'"

By putting these two prophetic hadiths together, we understand that the infallible Imams should take charge of people's affairs in all matters without exception, be they financial matters, civic politics and the running of a household, or eschatological matters and those pertaining to religious humanities and sciences. That is firstly because their being most knowledgeable is absolute. This is the minor premise. Secondly, the Prophet made it mandatory for the leader to be the most knowledgeable—which is the major premise. The conclusion is that their leadership is permanent and absolute.

Imam Ali says in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 142:

أَيْنَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمُوا أَنَّهُمُ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ دُونَنَا كَذِباً وَبَغْياً عَلَيْنَا أَنْ رَفَعَنَا اللهُ وَوَضَعَهُمْ، وَأَعْطَانَا وَحَرَمَهُمْ، وَأَدْخَلَنَا وَأَخْرَجَهُمْ، بِنَا يُسْتَعْطَى الْهُدَى وَيُسْتَجْلَى الْعَمَى. إِنَّ الأَئِمَّةَ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ غُرِسُوا فِي هَذَا الْبَطْنِ مِنْ هَاشِمٍ، لَا تَصْلُحُ عَلَى سِوَاهُمْ وَلَا تَصْلُحُ الْوُلَاةُ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ[373]

Where are those who falsely and in rebellion against us claim that they, instead of us, are firmly grounded in knowledge, even though God has lifted us up and kept them down, given to us [of His blessing and knowledge] but deprived them? He has put us in [monotheism and levels of favor] and kept them out. Guidance is begged through us [and through

us guidance is shared among everyone, each taking his share] and blindness is sought to be changed to brightness [the eye seeing and inner light appearing in everyone's hearts enabling them to rip the veils of ignorance from their eyes and see things clearly]. The Imams from Quraysh were planted in this womb by Hāshim. It is not appropriate for anyone else and the leaders cannot be anyone else.

In sermon 145 he says:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَعْرِفُوا الرُّشْدَ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي تَرَكَهُ، وَلَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِمِيثَاقِ الْكِتَابِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي نَقَضَهُ، وَلَنْ تُمَسِّكُوا بِهِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي نَبَذَهُ، فَالْتَمِسُوا ذَلِكَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَهْلِهِ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَيْشُ الْعِلْمِ وَمَوْتُ الْجَهْلِ، هُمُ الَّذِينَ يُخْبِرُكُمْ حُكْمُهُمْ عَنْ عِلْمِهِمْ وَصَمْتُهُمْ عَنْ مَنْطِقِهِمْ وَظَاهِرُهُمْ عَنْ بَاطِنِهِمْ لَا يُخَالِفُونَ الدِّينَ وَلَا يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ، فَهُوَ بَيْنَهُمْ شَاهِدٌ صَادِقٌ وَصَامِتٌ نَاطِقٌ.[374]

You should know that you will never know guidance unless you know who has abandoned it. You will never abide by the pledge of the Book unless you know who has broken it, and you will not cling to it unless you know who has rejected it. Seek that from its owners because they are the life of knowledge and death of ignorance. Those are they whose commandment tells you of their knowledge and silence [tells you] of what they say; their outward appearance tells you what is inside them.

They do not oppose religion or disagree about it. It is among them a truthful witness and a silent speaker.

This is because their acting in accordance with the religion and the concentration of the meaning and spirit of the religion in their consciences and souls are the best, truthful testimony to their essence. The application to their hearts and limbs of the secrets of the religion is the best closed-lipped, speaking-hearted, practical testimony to their essence.

Imam Sajjād's Prayer

Imam Sajjād (Zayn al-ᶜĀbidīn) said in his prayer (*duᶜāʾ*) on the Day of ᶜArafah (*al-Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādiyyah*, prayer 47):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ ابْتَدَأْتَ دِينَكَ فِي كُلِّ أَوَانِ بِإِمَامٍ أَقَمْتَهُ عَلَماً لِعِبَادِكَ وَمَنَاراً فِي بِلَادِكَ بَعْدَ أَنْ وَصَلْتَ حَبْلَهُ بِحَبْلِكَ، وَجَعَلْتَهُ الذَّرِيعَةَ إِلَى رِضْوَانِكَ، وَافْتَرَضْتَ طَاعَتَهُ وَحَذَّرْتَ مَعْصِيَتَهُ، وَأَمَرْتَ بِامْتِثَالِ

اَمْرِهِ وَالِانْتِهَاءِ عِنْدَ نَهْيِهِ، وَأَلَّا يَتَقَدَّمَهُ مُتَقَدِّمٌ، وَلَا يَتَأَخَّرَ مُتَأَخِّرٌ، فَهُوَ عِصْمَةُ اللَّائِذِينَ وَكَهْفُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَعُرْوَةُ الْمُتَمَسِّكِينَ وَبَهَاءُ الْعَالَمِينَ.

O God, surely You have supported Your religion at all times with an Imam whom You have set up as a banner for Your servants and a lighthouse in Your lands after linking his rope to Your rope, making him the means to Your pleasure, making obedience to him obligatory, cautioning against disobeying him, enjoining the carrying out of his commands, refraining from what he has forbidden and not overtaking or lagging behind him! Hence, he is protection for those seeking shelter, the cave of the believers, a bond for people to cling to, and the beauty of all worlds!

The blessed Sayyid Ali Khān Kabīr wrote a fine commentary on this part of the prayer in *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*. We cite an abridged version of it: Ali Ibn al-Husayn described the Imam's status as fourfold:

One:

عِصْمَةُ اللَّائِذِينَ

meaning protection for whoever seeks refuge in him through his guiding him to the straight path, avoiding one extreme or the other.

Two:

كَهْفُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

meaning the refuge for the faithful, who refer to him in all cases of doubt and rely on him to rescue them from the darkness.

Three:

عُرْوَةُ الْمُتَمَسِّكِينَ

meaning the savior of whoever clings to him, follows him, carries out his commands, and refrains from what he has forbidden, from falling into the perils of perdition and into calamities.

Four:

بَهَاءُ الْعَالَمِينَ

meaning the world is ordered and beautifully molded through him because through his guidance and comportment the scale is balanced and the pillar of truth is erected among the creatures.

This prayer proves that there has to be an Imam at all times, something that both reason and transmitted knowledge (*naql*) agree upon.

Reason declares that everyone needs other people to cooperate with and live socially with. It is impossible to live alone. Mankind divided up into groups, plots of land, and countries were formed, and people needed universal laws to govern over transactions, marriage, and criminal matters fairly. Otherwise quarrels begin, fighting breaks out, people kill each another, and towns and cities are destroyed, and chaos ensues. There must be a law and rule to govern the people and bring them peace and comfort. That law is religious law (*shar*^{c}), which blazes a trail for them to travel to put their livelihood in order and sets up a road for them to God, imposes upon them what reminds them of the Hereafter and the return to their Lord, warns and calls to them from a nearby place, and guides them on the straight path.

The teacher must be human because it is impossible for an angel to teach this way. Other animals are too low to do so. Therefore, it has to be a human, but he has to have signs from God—namely miracles—to prove that the code of religious law is from their Lord, in order for the species to yield to it.

And as with the world order, God does not withhold sending down rain, because the earth needs water to grow trees, grass, and vegetation, and animals need water to stay alive. Similarly, the world order needs an Imam to teach people what is best for this world and the Hereafter.

Yes, that is the case. How can One who makes eyebrows grow just for beauty, not necessity, not send an Imam, a certain blessing and mercy, whose task it is to direct mankind on the straight path!

Look at the Exalted's care and grace in providing for His creatures by creating such a person to provide immediate benefit, and security and goodness in the Hereafter. Such a man is God's vicegerent on earth, the Imam sent to guide the servants. He is the Imam, hoisted as a banner for His servants and as a lighthouse for the lands.

If you say that this means that a prophet has to be sent who is the legislator—the expounder of the code of religious law—and not just any Imam, my response is: Just as those who are accountable need a prophet to derive the religious law and wisdom from revelation, after his passing they also need a custodian of what the prophet communicated to the community, because they cannot remember all God's laws, and the Book does not provide sufficient knowledge of the laws to obviate the need for an Imam.

This is because the Book contains that which is indistinct (*mujmal*) and detailed (*mufaṣṣal*), unequivocal and equivocal, particular and general, that which abrogates and that which is abrogated, esoteric knowledge, obscure legal intricacies, and so on, which can only be

comprehended by a prophet via revelation or a prophet's executor who listens and understands everything he hears from the prophet and retains it without any change. Personal judgment is precluded.

If it were valid, it would only be so in the case of necessity, but he makes it unnecessary. Thus, there has to be a custodian who knows these matters as they were. That can only be done by someone with a holy soul, high wisdom, divine insight, a pure heart, and fine attributes, and who is free from impurity so that Divine Knowledge can inhere in him. That is why some mystics say that the essence of prophecy and the message never stopped or became abrogated. The only thing that came to an end was the Prophet or Messenger, and the angel who brought revelation stopped coming down in human form. Hence, there are numerous hadiths from the infallible Imams on the difference between a messenger, a prophet, and a person to whom the angel speaks (*muḥaddath*).

A messenger is someone to whom the angel appears and speaks. A prophet is someone who sees the angel in dreams. A person can be both a prophet and messenger. A *muḥaddath* only hears the angel's voice and cannot see his form. There is a famous prophetic hadith that says:

إنَّ فِي أُمَّتِي مُحَدَّثِينَ مُكَلَّمِينَ.

"In my nation are those who are told and spoken to [by the angels]."

He also said:

إنَّ لِلّهِ عِباداً لَيْسُوا بِأَنبِياءَ يَغْبِطُهُمُ النَّبِيُّون.

"God has servants who are not prophets, but prophets want to be like them."

As for hadiths, there are numerous ones narrated by both Sunnis and Shi'a...[375]

What the Imam's Guidance Means

Of course, it is obvious to the clear-sighted, believing critic that many theologians have applied this kind of reasoning to provide a proof for the need for the existence of the Imam—based on protecting society and human civilization, ensuring people's rights, not attacking others, and developing a virtuous city on a foundation of cooperating to survive instead of competing to survive. Their intention was to prove the need for an Imam, but the Imam's status and position is more sublime than this task, and his duty is more valuable than that.

In our hadiths, we encounter miraculous aspects of the Imam's personality. For example, human life depends on him. If there were

no Imam, the earth would swallow up its inhabitants. He is God's rope. He is the Greatest Name. He is the greatest sign of the truth, the mainstay of the worlds, the creatures' superintendent, and the mainstay of hearts' life and assurance. That is why, on the basis of the other flawed reasoning, if every nation's experienced philosophers and reasonable people apply the rule of fairness in accordance with their people's needs and train the people to obey that law, teaching children not to lie, steal, or be aggressive towards others, as in some countries that know nothing of religion but still maintain order without any Imams to tell them what to do and what not to do, there is no need for an Imam.

The Imam Strengthens the Link Between Hearts and God

However, the Imam's function is not just to maintain order. He is the link between creation and Creator.

When man steps onto this natural world, he is separated from the holy world and is deprived of the original illumination; he unknowingly becomes depressed—whether he is a chief or is from the rank and file, lives in society or is disconnected from it, he feels a great loss within himself.

Suppose that a man lives alone on a pleasant island, without any wife, children, parents, brother, sister, partner, neighbor, ruler, subject, chief, or minion. He has everything he needs at his disposal but is always worried about something without knowing why. He is never free of worry or agitation. He is tortured by false memories, and whenever he thinks of his weak points, he becomes most worried. The feeling of falling far from his real destiny poisons his pleasant life on that pleasing island, and turns that natural beauty into a devilish hell in his sight. He feels loss without knowing why!

Man does not find serenity and peace unless he is intimate with God:

الا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوب

...now surely by God's remembrance are hearts set at rest. (13:28)

Peace, tranquility, and God's remembrance will only settle in the heart through training by a perfect trainer who has traveled all the paths up to the Hereafter and whose tongue utters:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي

"Ask me before you lose me!"

It is he who can be the Leader [of the nation], not someone who lacks this attribute. Either a man must attain this position or be trained

under the supervision of such a man; the former is the Imam and the latter is the follower—there is no third way. The Glorious Qur'an quotes the inhabitants of Hell as saying to the custodians of Hell:

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ • فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذَنْبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

And they say: Had we but listened or pondered, we would not be among the inhabitants of the blaze. So they will confess their sins, but far from mercy will be the inhabitants of the blaze!' (67:10–11)

It can be inferred from this verse that the sin committed by the inhabitants of Hell is that they have lived their own way and not accepted the Imam's training. No matter how good they think their own ideas are, it is not enough—either one should reach the level of pure intellect without the need for external means or be obedient to such an intellect. Otherwise one's certain place is Hell.

Three Categories of People

Elsewhere in the Qur'an, God divides the servants into three categories:

وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً • فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ • وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ • وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ • أُولَٰئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ

And you shall be three sorts: Those on the right hand; what of those on the right hand? And those on the left hand; what of those on the left hand? And the foremost are the foremost! Those will be the favoured. (56:7–11)

At the end of the chapter He states:

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ • وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ • فَسَلَامٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ • وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ الضَّالِّينَ • فَنُزُلٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ • وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ

Then if he is one of the favoured, then happiness and bounty and a garden of bliss, and if he is one of those on the right hand, then "Peace be on you," from those on the right hand. But if he is of the rejecters, the erring, then the welcome will be boiling water, and burning in hell. (56:88–94).

The *favoured* means the infallible Imams and those who have been trained by them, reached their destination and lain down in God's Peaceful Court; the Exalted then says:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَرْضِيَّةً

O soul that art at rest! Return to your Lord, content and pleasing. (89:27–28)

Those on the right hand means the people who travel the road of the *sharīᶜah* by following the Imam but do not reach their destinations or attain the highest position.

Those on the left hand means rejecters and liars. They are obstinate people who follow their own desires and opinions and turn away from the Imam.

Ali states this fact to Kumayl Ibn Ziyād Nakhaʿī in *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

قَالَ: يَا كُمَيْلُ إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ أَوْعِيَةٌ فَخَيْرُهَا أَوْعَاهَا، فَاحْفَظْ عَنِّي مَا أَقُولُ لَكَ: النَّاسُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: فَعَالِمٌ رَبَّانِيٌّ، وَمُتَعَلِّمٌ عَلَى سَبِيلِ نَجَاةٍ، وَهَمَجٌ رَعَاعٌ أَتْبَاعُ كُلِّ نَاعِقٍ، يَمِيلُونَ مَعَ كُلِّ رِيحٍ، لَمْ يَسْتَضِيئُوا بِنُورِ الْعِلْمِ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَأُوا إِلَى رُكْنٍ وَثِيقٍ[376]

Kumayl Ibn Ziyād says:

> The Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, took me by my hand and took me out to the graveyard. When [the Imam] was on the outskirts of the town, he took a deep breath then said: 'O Kumayl, these hearts are containers. The best ones are those with the largest capacity. Memorize what I tell you.
>
> There are three kinds of people: a divine scholar, a learner on the path of salvation, and riffraff nymphs,[377] followers of every brayer, moving with every wind. They have not sought illumination by the light of knowledge and not sought refuge in a safe corner.

It can be seen that the Imam divides people into three categories:

One: Divine scholars, namely the Imams or those educated and trained by the Imams, those into whose hearts divine light has shone. They have overcome cardinal desires and fettered Satan with their own hands. They have become aware of the entire world, their hearts are illuminated, and their consciousness is alert—they are righteous and lead the human race to righteousness.

Two: Followers of the divine scholars, who have started to behave—their hearts are illuminated by the first category and they walk in their guidance.

Three: The rank and file who follow their desires and live their lives like animals; they have totally regressed and can never sense who the first or even the second categories are.

The Earth Has Never Been and Will Never Be without a Proof

Therefore, the Imam's responsibility is to guide people and link their hearts to the lofty position of the favor of and meeting with their Creator. Obviously this is the purpose of creation. Therefore, it has been related in the hadiths that if there are only two people in the world, one of them has to be an Imam to the other one.

Islam's reliance—Kulaynī—narrates via his chain from Ibn Ṭayyār:

سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبدِاللهِ عليه السّلام يَقُولُ: لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ فِي الارضِ إلّا اثنانِ لَكانَ احدُهُما الحُجّة[378]

"I heard Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq] say: 'If only two people remain on the earth, one of them will be the proof.'"

Via two other chains, one from Ḥamzah al-Ṭayyār and another from Muhammad Ibn ʿĪsā, he quotes Imam Ṣādiq as saying:

لَوْ بَقِيَ اثنانِ لَكانَ احدُهُما الحُجّةَ عَلى صاحِبِهِ

"If two remain, one of them will be the proof for his fellow."[379]

Via his chains of transmission, he narrates from Karrām:

قالَ أبو عَبدِاللهِ عليه السّلام: لَوْ كانَ النّاسُ رَجُلَيْنِ لَكانَ أحَدُهُما الإمامَ. إنَّ آخِرَ مَن يَموتُ الإمامُ لِئَلّا يَحْجَجَ أحَدٌ على اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ أنَّهُ تَرَكَهُ بِغَيْرِ حُجّةٍ لِلهِ عَلَيْهِ[380]

Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq] said: "If the only people left are two men, one of them will be the Imam. The last to die will be the Imam, so that no one can argue with God that He left him without a proof from God."

Yūnus Ibn Yaʿqūb quotes Imam Ṣādiq as saying:

سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي الارضِ إلّا اثنانِ لَكانَ أحَدُهُما الحُجّة[381].

"I heard him say: 'If only two people remained on earth, one of them would be the proof.'"

Three: Hadiths addressing God's Messenger's words:

لَا تَخْلُو الارضُ مِنهُم

"The earth is never without them."

Via his chain of transmission, Muhammad Ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī quotes Husayn Ibn Abī al-ʿAlāʾ as saying:

قُلْتُ لابي عَبدِاللهِ عليه السّلام: تَكُونُ الارضُ لَيْسَ فِيها إمامٌ؟ قالَ: لَا. قلتُ: يَكونُ إمامانِ؟ قالَ: لا، إلّا وأحَدُهُما صامِت[382]

I asked Abū ᶜAbdillāh [Imam Jaᶜfar Ṣādiq]: "Will the earth ever be without an Imam?"

He replied: "No!"

I asked: "Can there be two Imams?"

He replied: "No, not unless one of them is silent."

He also narrates via his chain from Isḥāq Ibn ᶜAmmār concerning Abū ᶜAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq]:

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِاللهِ عليه السلام قَالَ: سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ الارضَ لَا تَخْلُو إِلَّا وَفِيهَا إِمَامٌ. كَيْمَا إِنْ زَادَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ شَيْئاً رَدَّهُمْ وَإِنْ نَقَصُوا شَيْئاً أَتَمَّهُ لَهُمْ[383]

"I heard him say: 'The earth will never be without an Imam, so that if the believers overdo something, he will restrain them, and if they underdo something, he will complete it.'"

Via his chain of transmission, he quotes ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Sulaymān ᶜĀmirī as saying that Imam Ṣādiq said:

مَا زَالَتِ الارضُ إِلَّا وَلِلهِ فِيهَا الْحُجَّةُ، يَعْرِفُ الْحَلَالَ وَالْحَرَامَ وَيَدْعُو النَّاسَ إِلَى سَبِيلِ اللهِ.[384]

"The earth has never been without a proof of God's to teach what is lawful and what is unlawful and invite people to God's path."

Elsewhere, he narrates via his chain from Ibn Muskān on the authority of Abū Baṣīr on the authority of one of the two of them [Imam Muhammad Bāqir or Imam Ṣādiq]:

قَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ لَمْ يَدَعِ الارضَ بِغَيْرِ عَالِمٍ، وَلَوْلَا ذَلِكَ لَمْ يُعْرَفِ الْحَقُّ وَالْبَاطِلُ.

"He said: 'God will never leave the earth without one who knows. Otherwise, truth and falsehood will not be recognized.'"[385]

Via another chain from Ali Ibn Abī Ḥamzah from Abū Baṣīr he quotes Imam Ṣādiq as saying:

قَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ أَجَلُّ وَأَعْظَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يَتْرُكَ الارضَ بِغَيْرِ إِمَامٍ عَادِلٍ.

"God is too Sublime and too Great to leave the earth without a just Imam."

Four: Regarding God's Messenger's words:

وَلَوْ خَلَتْ لَانْسَاخَتْ بِأَهْلِهِ

"If it were without, it would swallow up its inhabitants," Thiqat al-Islam Kulaynī narrates via his chain from Ali Ibn Rāshid from Abū al-Hasan [Ali Ibn Mūsā Ibn Jaᶜfar] stating:

قَالَ: قُلْتُ لابی عَبدِاللهِ علیه السّلام: أتبقَی الارضُ بغَیرِ إمامٍ؟ قالَ: لَوبَقِیَتِ الارضُ بِغَیرِ إمامٍ لَساخَت.

"I asked Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq]: 'Could the earth be left without an Imam?' He replied: 'If the earth were left without an Imam, it would sink.'"[386]

He narrates via his chain from Muhammad Ibn Fuḍayl regarding Imam Riḍā:

قَالَ: قُلْتُ لَهُ: أتبقَی الارضُ بِغَیرِ إمامٍ؟ قالَ: لَا. قُلْتُ: إنّا نُروی عَنْ أبی عَبدِاللهِ علیه السّلام أنّها لا تَبقَی بِغَیرِ إمامٍ إلّا أنْ یَسخَطَ اللهُ تَعالی علی أهلِ الارضِ أوْ عَلَی العِبادِ. فَقالَ: لَا. لَا تَبقَی إذاً لَساخَت.[387]

"He said: 'I asked [Imam Riḍā]: "Could the earth be left without an Imam?" He replied: "No." I said: "It is narrated to us from Abū ʿAbdillāh [Imam Ṣādiq] that it will not be left without an Imam unless the Exalted God is angry with the people of earth or with the servants." So he replied: "No, it will not be left. Otherwise it would sink."'"

He narrates via another chain from Abū Harāsah from Imam Muhammad Bāqir:

قَالَ: لَوأنَّ الإمامَ رُفِعَ مِنَ الارضِ ساعَةً لَماجَتْ بِأهلِها كَما یَموجُ البَحرُ بِأهلِه.[388]

"If the Imam were taken away from the earth for [just] an hour, it would heave under those on it, the way the sea heaves under those on it."

He narrates via his chain from Muʿallā Ibn Muhammad from Washshā:

سَألْتُ أبَاالحَسنِ الرِّضا علیه السّلام: هَلْ تَبقَی الارضُ بِغَیرِ إمامٍ؟ قالَ: لَا. قُلْتُ: إنّا نُروی أنّها لا تَبقَی إلّا أنْ یَسخَطَ اللهُ عَزّوَجَلَّ عَلَی العِبادِ؟ قالَ: لا تَبقی إذاً لَساخَت.[389]

> I asked Abū al-Hasan al-Riḍā: Will the earth ever be left without an Imam?" He replied: "No."
>
> I said: "It is narrated to us that it will not be left so unless the Mighty and Sublime God is angry with the servants."
>
> He replied: "It will not be left so. Otherwise it would sink."

Five: The Prophet's words:

وَأنَّكَ لَاتُخلِی الارضَ مِن حُجَّةٍ لَكَ عَلی خَلقِكَ ظاهِرٍ لَیسَ بِالمُطاعِ أوْ خائِفٍ مَغمُورٍ... أولَئِكَ الاقَلُّونَ عَدَداً الاعظَمُونَ قَدراً عِندَاللهِ.[390]

"...and that You will never leave the earth without a proof of You for your creation—visible but not obeyed or fearful and hidden...They are the fewest in number but of the greatest value to God..."

Imam Ali's Words to Kumayl about the Divine Proofs

Imam Ali said to Kumayl when they went out to the graveyard in the desert:

اللهُمَّ بَلَى لَا تَخْلُو الارضُ مِن قَائِمٍ لِلّٰهِ بِحُجَّةٍ إِمَّا ظَاهِراً مَشْهُوراً أَوْ خَائِفاً مَغْمُوراً لِئَلَّا تَبْطُلَ حُجَجُ اللهِ وَبَيِّنَاتُهُ، وَكَمْ ذَا؟ وَأَيْنَ أُولَئِكَ؟ أُولَئِكَ وَاللهِ الاقَلُّونَ عَدَداً وَالاعْظَمُونَ قَدْراً. يَحْفَظُ اللهُ بِهِمْ حُجَجَهُ وَبَيِّنَاتِهِ حَتَّى يُودِعُوهَا نُظَرَاءَهُمْ وَيَزْرَعُوهَا فِي قُلُوبِ أَشْبَاهِهِمْ. هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمُ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَبَاشَرُوا رُوحَ الْيَقِينِ، وَاسْتَلَانُوا مَا اسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُتْرَفُونَ، وَأَنِسُوا بِمَا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَصَحِبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاحُهَا مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْمَحَلِّ الاعْلَى. أُولَئِكَ خُلَفَاءُ اللهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ وَالدُّعَاةُ إِلَى دِينِهِ. آهِ آهِ شَوْقاً إِلَى رُؤْيَتِهِمْ. اصْرِفْ إِذَا شِئْتَ.[391]

[After setting out four categories of mean and worldly scholars to Kumayl, Ali reveals his secret hope to find someone to teach the knowledge deposited in his chest, but he cannot find one. Thus, he says:] The world has become empty of knowledge! [Then, after a short pause, he continues:] Oh God, yes, the earth will never be without an establisher of proof for God, [an establisher] either visible or fearful and hidden so that God's proofs and communications are not invalidated. How many are there? Where are they? Those, by God are the smallest in number but of the greatest value to God. God keeps His proofs and communications with them so that they can deposit them with their counterparts and plant them in the hearts of those like them. Knowledge has launched them onto true vision. They have had direct contact with the spirit of certainty. They find soft what those living in luxury find rough. They enjoy the company of what the ignorant feel desolated by. They keep the world company with their own bodies but their souls are suspended by the loftiest station. Those are God's Caliphs on His earth and the callers towards His religion. Argh! Argh! How anxious [I am] to meet them! Go if you want!

Kulaynī narrates via his chain from Abū Isḥāq, from someone he considers reliable, from one of Imam Ali's companions:

قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عليه السلام: اللهُمَّ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِي أَرْضَكَ مِنْ حُجَّةٍ لَكَ عَلَى خَلْقِكَ[392]

"The Master of the Faithful said: 'O God! You will never leave Your earth without a Proof for You for Your creation.'"

He narrates via his chain from Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī from Imam Muhammad Bāqir:

قَالَ: وَاللهِ مَا تَرَكَ اللهُ أَرْضاً مُنْذُ قَبَضَ آدَمَ عليه السلام إِلَّا وَفِيهَا إِمَامٌ يُهْتَدى بِهِ إِلَى اللهِ وَهُوَ حُجَّتُهُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ وَلَا تَبْقَى الارضُ بِغَيْرِ إِمَامٍ حُجَّةٍ لِلهِ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ[393]

"He said: 'By God, since He took Adam, God has never left any land without an Imam on it, to be followed to God. He is His proof for His servants. The earth will never be without an Imam, a proof for God for His servants.'"

There are four hadiths narrated via various chains from Imam Ṣādiq, Imam Kāẓim and Imam Riḍā that say that God's proof for His servants is incomplete without an Imam.[394]

In *Sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah*, blessed Sayyid Ali Khān says about the hadiths narrated by Sunnis on the need for an Imam:

> As for what there is via Sunni chains of transmission, an example is the famous hadith that according to the consensus is narrated on the authority of the Prophet:
>
> مَن مَاتَ وَلَمْ يَعْرِفْ إِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً
>
> "Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time, dies a pre-Islamic death."

Ḥākim cites a hadith that means the same thing on the authority of Ibn Omar on the authority of God's Messenger and considers it to be authentic:

مَن مَاتَ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ إِمَامٌ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً

"Whoever dies without having an Imam, dies a pre-Islamic death!"

Ibn Mardawayh quotes Ali as saying:

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي قَوْلِ اللهِ تَعَالَى «يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ» قَالَ: يُدْعَى كُلُّ قَوْمٍ بِإِمَامِ زَمَانِهِمْ وَكِتَابِ رَبِّهِمْ وَسُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِمْ.

"He said: 'God's Messenger said about the Exalted God's words: *On the Day when We call all peoples by their Imam* (17:71): "Every nation will be called by the Imam of their time, the Book of their Lord, and the tradition of their prophet."'"

Ibn ʿAsākir narrates from Khālid Ibn Ṣafwān:

إِنَّهُ قَالَ: لَمْ تَخْلُ الارضُ مِن قَائِمٍ لِلهِ بِحُجَّتِهِ فِي عِبَادِهِ

"He says: 'The earth will never be without an establisher of God's proof for Him among His servants.'"

An Allusion to the Appearance of the Implementer

Six: In this hadith, the Prophet alludes to the appearance of the implementer [of God's command] from Muhammad's Family, al-Ḥujjat Ibn al-Hasan al-ᶜAskarī, may the Exalted God hasten his noble reappearance:

وَلَوْلَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ الدُّنيا إِلّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ ذَلِكَ اليَوْمَ حَتّى يَخْرُجَ قَائِمُنا فَيَمْلأَ الأَرْضَ قِسْطاً وَعَدْلاً كَمامُلِئَتْ ظُلْماً وَجَوْراً.

"If nothing were left of the world except a single day, God, Mighty and Sublime is He, would extend that day until our implementer reappears to fill the earth with equity and justice, just as it was filled with inequity and injustice."

This issue is not exclusive to the Shiᶜa. On the contrary it is a universal issue and is indubitably a fundamental of Islam. There are a great many hadiths that mean the same as this one, and are narrated by leading Sunni scholars via their chains of transmission from the Prophet regarding the reappearance of Imam Mahdī, may our souls be made his sacrifice.

God willing, we will address them in detail below.

One of the hadiths in section 2 subsection 8 providing exegesis of the verse:

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

is a hadith narrated by Shaykh Ṣadūq via his chain from Mūsā Ibn Muslim from Masᶜadah.

Masᶜadah says:

> I was in the presence of [Imam] Ṣādiq when a crook-backed old man, leaning on his walking stick, came to him. He greeted him and Abū ᶜAbdillāh [the Imam] greeted him back. [The old man] then said: "God's Messenger's son, give me your hand so that I can kiss it." So he gave him his hand, and he kissed it, then wept.
>
> Abū ᶜAbdillāh asked him: "What is making you cry, old man?" He replied: "I have been waiting for your implementer for a hundred years. I say, 'This month,' or, 'This year.' I am old now. My skin and bone are weak, and my time has nearly come. I do not like what I see happen to you. I see you slain or exiled and I see your enemies flying [high]. How can I not cry?"

Abū ʿAbdillāh's eyes teared up. He then said: "O Shaykh, if God keeps you alive to see our implementer, you will be on the highest summit. If death comes to you, you will come along with Muhammad's valuable thing on the Day of Resurrection. We are his valuable thing:"

فَقَالَ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنِّي مُخَلِّفٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ تَمَسَّكُوا بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي.

Muhammad said: "I am leaving two valuable things among you. Cling to them [and] you will never go astray: God's Book and my Household."

The old man said: "I am not worried after hearing this tiding."

[The Imam] then said: "Old man, know that our implementer will be from Hasan ʿAskarī's loins, Hasan is from Ali's loins, Ali is from Muhammad's loins, and Muhammad is from Ali's loins. Ali is from my son Mūsā's loins." He pointed to his son Mūsā. "This one is from my loins. We are twelve in total. We are all infallible—purified."

The old man asked: "Master, are any of you better than others?"

[The Imam] replied: "No, we are of equal merit, but some of us are more knowledgeable than others."

ثُمَّ قَالَ: يَا شَيْخُ وَاللهِ لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ قَائِمُنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا أَنَّ الشِّيعَةَ يَقَعُونَ فِي فِتْنَةٍ وَحَيْرَةٍ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ هُنَاكَ يُثَبِّتُ اللهُ عَلَى هَذَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنْهُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.[395]

He then said: "Old man, by God, if the world only had a day left, God would prolong that day until our, the Household's, implementer reappears. Lo! Our followers (*al-shīʿa*) fall into strife and confusion over his absence. God will then make the chosen stand firm over that. O God! Help them with that!"

Shaykh Ṣadūq narrates via his chain from Abd al-Ghaffār Ibn Qāsim Abū Maryam from Abū Hurayrah:

قَالَ: دَخَلْتُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَقَدْ نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الآيَةُ «إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ». فَقَرَأَهَا عَلَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللهِ، قَالَ أَنَا الْمُنْذِرُ، أَتَعْرِفُونَ الْهَادِي؟ قُلْنَا: لَا، يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ. قَالَ: هُوَ خَاصِفُ النَّعْلِ، فَطَوَّلَتِ الأَعْنَاقُ إِذْ خَرَجَ عَلَيْنَا عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام مِنْ بَعْضِ الْحُجَرِ وَبِيَدِهِ نَعْلُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ إِلَيْنَا: أَلَا إِنَّهُ الْمُبَلِّغُ عَنِّي وَالإِمَامُ بَعْدِي وَزَوْجُ ابْنَتِي وَأَبُو سِبْطَيَّ فَخْرًا. نَحْنُ أَهْلُ

بَيْتٍ أَذْهَبَ اللهُ عَنَّا الرِّجْسَ وَطَهَّرَنَا تَطْهِيراً مِنَ النَّنَسِ، تَقَاتِلُ بَعْدِي عَلَى التَّأْوِيلِ كَمَا قَاتَلْتُ عَلَى التَّنْزِيلِ، هُوَ الإِمَامُ أَبُو الأَئِمَّةِ الزُّهْدِ. قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ كَمِ الأَئِمَّةُ بَعْدَكَ؟ قَالَ: اثْنَا عَشَرَ، عَدَدَ نُقَبَاءِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، وَمِنَّا مَهْدِيُّ هَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ يَمْلَأُ اللهُ الأَرْضَ قِسْطاً وَعَدْلاً كَمَا مُلِئَتْ جَوْراً وَظُلْماً، لَا تَخْلُو الأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا سَاخَتْ بِأَهْلِهَا.[396]

[Abū Hurayrah] says:

> I went to see God's Messenger after this verse
>
> إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ
>
> was revealed. God's Messenger then recited it to us. He said: "I am the warner. Do you know the guide?"
>
> We replied: "No, God's Messenger."
>
> He said: "He is cobbling my sandal." Necks stretched out when Ali came out to us from one of the rooms with God's Messenger's sandal in his hand. [The Prophet] then turned to us [and said]:
>
> > Lo! This one is the bearer of my news, the Imam after me, the husband of my daughter and the father of my two grandsons. What a source of pride! We are a Household from whom God has kept impurity away and cleansed thoroughly of any abomination. After I die, you will fight over interpretation as I have fought over revelation. He is the Imam, the father of the ascetic Imams.
>
> He was then asked: "God's Messenger, how many Imams are there after you?"
>
> He replied: "Twelve, the same number as the Israelite chiefs. This nation's Mahdī is one of us. God will fill the earth with equity and justice, just as it has become full of inequity and injustice. The earth will never be without them. Otherwise it would swallow up its inhabitants."

ᶜAllāmah Majlisī's Commentary on the Exegetical Hadiths

ᶜAllāmah Majlisī says by way of clarification of the hadiths that provide exegesis of the verse

إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

after narrating several hadiths on the matter:

> Sayyid [Ibn Ṭāwūs, may God be pleased with him] writes in *Saʿd al-Suʿūd*: "Concerning this verse, Shaykh Muhammad Ibn ʿAbbās Ibn Marwān narrates via 50 different chains of transmission that the *guide* means Ali in God's words: *and every nation has a guide.*"

Majlisī then says after some commentary on this verse:

> The third possible explanation is that the *warner* means the Prophet and the *guide* means Ali. Ibn ʿAbbās said:
>
> > God's Messenger put his hand on his [own] chest and said:
> >
> > أَنَا الْمُنْذِرُ
> >
> > "I am the warner," He pointed to Ali's shoulder and said:
> >
> > أَنْتَ الْهَادِي، يَا عَلِيُّ بِكَ يَهْتَدِي الْمُهْتَدُونَ بَعْدِي.
> >
> > "You are the guide, Ali. The [rightly] guided will be guided by you [alone] after I am gone."

Obviously in the light of so many hadiths, this verse means that the world will never be without a guiding Imam. The Master of the Faithful and no one else was the guide, Caliph, and Imam after the Prophet for a number of reasons:

One: He is compared to the Prophet, the latter being the *warner* and Ali being the *guide*. No reasonable person who knows grammar can doubt that this means that he will do what he did or even more, because the Prophet says that he is just a warner, but Ali is a guide, which is more potent.

Two: Exclusivity can be inferred from God's Messenger's words:

أَنْتَ الْهَادِي

"you are the guide," because a predicate prefixed by the definite article indicates exclusivity. The same applies to the Master of the Faithful's words:

أَنَا الْهَادِي إِلَى مَا جَاءَ بِهِ

for the same reason, and, to God's Messenger's words:

وَالْهَادِي عَلِيٌّ

because prefixing the subject with the definite article also indicates exclusivity.

Three: God's Messenger put the local adverb (*ẓarf*) first:

بِكَ يَهْتَدِي الْمُهْتَدُونَ

which also indicates exclusivity [i.e. The [rightly] guided will be guided by you alone]. There are similar examples above. It is clear from these hadiths that the hadith

أَصْحَابِي كَالنُّجُومِ بِأَيِّهِمُ اقْتَدَيْتُمُ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

"My companions are like stars; you will be guided by *whichever* of them you follow," is falsely attributed by them [the Sunnis] to God's Messenger. It is conceded by their senior [scholars], including the author of the commentary on *al-Shifā'* and his narrators, as well as by Ibn Ḥazm and Hāfiẓ Zayn al-Dīn ʿIrāqī, that it is fabricated. There will be a comment on that below, God willing.[397]

In *ʿAbaqāt al-Anwār*, vol. 12, part 2, ʿAllāmah Mīr Ḥamīd Husayn Hindī, may God be pleased with him, discusses the hadith

أَصْحَابِي كَالنُّجُومِ

in detail, providing several reasons why the hadith is fabricated.[398]

In any case, in this part of the book, our main discussion is about the verse:

إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ

and to prove that the verse means the Master of the Faithful. That is why we have contented ourselves with hadiths on this matter. Of course there are a great many variously worded prophetic hadiths concerning his Imamate. They are recorded by both Shiʿa and Sunnis and are too numerous to mention. Some of them were cited above and others are still to come.

The Household's poet, Sayyid Ismāʿīl Ḥimyarī, says:

مُسا أَخَوَانِ ذَا هَادٍ إِلَى ذَا وَذَا فِينَا لِأُمَّتِهِ نَذِيرُ
فَأَحْمَدُ مُنْذِرٌ وَأَخُوهُ هَادٍ دَلِيلٌ لَا يُضِلُّ وَلَا يَحِيرُ
كَسَابِقِ حَلْبَةٍ وَلَهُ مَظَلٌّ أَمَامَ الْخَيْلِ حَيْثُ يَرَى الْبَصِيرُ[399]

[Allusion to the Prophet of God and Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib]

They are two brothers: this one guiding to that one,
That one a warner of his nation,
Ahmad is the warner and his brother is the guide
who never leads astray or is confused,
Like a race winner, with a blinker before his horse where the sighted sees.

Moreover, Ḥimyari says:

يَا أَحْمَدُ الْخَيْرُ الَّذِي إِنَّمَا كَانَ عَلَيْنَا رَحْمَةً تُنْشَرُ
حَمْزَةُ وَالطَّيَّارُ فِي جَنَّةٍ فَحَيْثُ مَا شَاءَ دَعَا جَعْفَرُ
مِنْهُمْ وَهَادِينَا الَّذِي نَحْنُ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَمًا نَا فِيهِ نَسْتَبْصِرُ
لَمَّا دَجَا الدِّينُ وَرَقَّ الْهُدَى وَجَارَ أَهْلُ الْأَرْضِ وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا
ذَاكَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ ذَاكَ الَّذِي دَانَتْ لَهُ خَيْبَرُ[400]

Ahmad of goodness who was nothing but a mercy spread over us,
Ḥamzah and Ṭayyār in Heaven, Jaʿfar praying wherever he pleases
Are of them, as is our guide through whom we see after being blind
When religion was dark, guidance was soft and the people of earth were tyrannical and proud
That [guide] is Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib; that is he to whom Khaybar yielded.

Ḥimyarī also says:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي الدِّينِ نُورٌ أُسْتَضَاءُ بِهِ وَكَانَ مِنْ جَهْلِهَا بِالْعِلْمِ شَافِيهَا
كَانَ النَّبِيُّ بِوَحْيِ اللهِ مُنْذِرَهَا وَكَانَ ذَا بَعْدَهُ لَا شَكَّ هَادِيهَا.[401]

He who was light, through which enlightenment is sought,
And their cure to their ignorance through knowledge,
The Prophet warned via revelation from God, and this one
Without a doubt, was their guide after him.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Muʿtazilī says in the seventh of his seven odes, called *ʿAlawiyyāt*, about Imam Ali's amazing characteristics and status:

الصَّبْرُ إِلَّا فِي فِرَاقِكَ يُحْمَلُ وَالصَّعْبُ إِلَّا عَنْ مَلَالِكَ يُسْهَلُ
يَا ظَالِمًا حَكَمَتْهُ فِي مُهْجَتِي حُكْمًا فِي شَرْعِ الْهَوَى لَا تَعْدِلُ
أَنْفَقْتُ عُمْرِي فِي هَوَاكَ تَكَرُّمًا وَتَضِنُّ بِالنَّزْرِ الْقَلِيلِ وَتَبْخَلُ
إِنْ تَرْحَمْ قَلْبِي تَصُمْ نَفْسَكَ إِنَّهُ لَكَ مَوْطِنٌ تَأْوِي إِلَيْهِ وَمَنْزِلُ
أَتَظُنُّ أَنِّي بِالْإِسَاءَةِ مُقْلِعٌ كَيْفَ الدَّوَاءُ وَقَدْ أُصِيبَ الْمَقْتَلُ
أَعْرِضْ وَصُدَّ وَجُرْ فَحُبُّكَ ثَابِتٌ يَتَنَقَّلُ الْأَحْوَالَ لَا يَتَنَقَّلُ
وَاللهِ لَا اسْلُوكَ حَتَّى أَنْطَوِي تَحْتَ التُّرَابِ يَحْتَوِينِي الْجَنْدَلُ
مَنْ لِي بِأَهْيَفَ قَدْ أَقَامَ قِيَامَتِي خَدٌّ لَهُ قَانٍ وَطَرْفٌ أَكْحَلُ

وَلَأَهْيَفَنَّ عَلَى الْهَوَى سِرَّ الْحَيَا إِنَّ الْفَضِيحَةَ فِي الْمَحَبَّةِ أَجْمَلُ

يَسْفَرُّ وَجْهِي حِينَ أَنْظُرُ وَجْهَهُ خَوفاً فَيُدرِكُهُ الحَيَاءُ وَيَجْفَلُ

لَا تُنكِرُوا قَيضَ الدُّمُوعِ فَإِنَّهَا نَفسِي يُصَعِّدُهَا الغَرَامُ المُشعَلُ
هِيَ مُهجَتِي تَحْلُلُ بِالبُكَاءِ أَسَفاً وَطَوْراً بِالزَّفِيرِ تَحَلَّلُ

يَا رَاكِباً تَهْوِي بِهِ شَدَنِيَّةٌ حَرْفٌ كَمَا تَهْوِي حَصَاةٌ مِن عَلُ
هَوْجَاءُ تَقْطَعُ جَوزَ تَيَّارِ القَلَا حَتَّى تَبُوصَ عَلَى يَدَيْهَا الأَرْجُلُ
عُجْ بِالغَرِيِّ عَلَى ضَرِيحٍ حَوْلَهُ نَادٍ لِأَملَاكِ السَّمَاءِ وَمَحفِلُ
فَمُسَبِّحٌ وَمُقَدِّسٌ وَمُمَجِّدٌ وَمُعَظِّمٌ وَمُكَبِّرٌ وَمُهَلِّلُ
وَالثِمْ ثَرَاهُ المِسكَ طِيباً وَاستَلِم عَيدَانَهُ قُبَلاً فَهُنَّ المَندَلُ
وَانظُر إِلَى الدَّعَوَاتِ تَصعَدُ عِندَهُ وَجُنُودِ وَحيِ اللهِ كَيفَ تَنَزَّلُ
وَالنُّورُ يَلمَعُ وَالنَّوَاظِرُ شُخَّصٌ وَاللُّسنُ خُرسٌ وَالبَصَائِرُ ذُهَّلُ
وَاغضُض وَغُضَّ فَثَمَّ سِرٌّ أَعجَمٌ دَقَّت مَعَانِيهِ وَأَمرٌ مُشكِلُ
وَقُلِ السَّلَامُ عَلَيكَ يَا مَولَى الوَرَى نَبَأٌ بِهِ نَطَقَ الكِتَابُ المُنزَلُ
وَخِلَافَةٌ مَا إِن لَهَا لَو لَم تَكُن مَنصُوصَةً عَن جِيدِ مَجدِكَ مَعدِلُ

عَجَباً لِهَدْيِ الأَرضِ يُضمِرُ تُربُهَا أَطوَادَ مَجدِكَ كَيفَ لَا تَتَزَلزَلُ
عَجَباً لِأَملَاكِ السَّمَاءِ يَفُوتُهَا نَظَراً لِوَجهِكَ كَيفَ لَا تَتَهَيَّلُ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبَأُ العَظِيمُ فَمَهمَهٌ فِي حُبِّهِ وَغُوَاةُ قَومٍ جُهَّلُ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّارُ الَّتِي شَبَّ السَّنَا مِنهَا لِمُوسَى وَالظَّلَامُ مُجَلَّلُ
يَا فُلكَ نُوحٍ حَيثُ كُلُّ بَسِيطَةٍ بَحرٌ يَمُورُ وَكُلُّ بَحرٍ جَدوَلُ
يَا وَارِثَ التَّورَاةِ وَالإِنجِيلِ وَ القُرآنِ وَالحِكَمِ الَّتِي لَا تُنقَلُ
لَولَاكَ مَا خُلِقَ الزَّمَانُ وَلَا دَجَى غِبُّ ابتِلَاجِ الفَجرِ لَيلٌ أَلْيَلُ

...

إِن كَانَ دِينُ مُحَمَّدٍ فِيهِ الهُدَى حَقّاً فَحُبُّكَ بَابُهُ وَالمَدخَلُ

...

صَلَّى عَلَيكَ اللهُ مِن مُتَسَرْبِلٍ فَمُصابُهنَّ سِواكَ لَا يَتَسَرْبَلُ
وَجَزَاكَ خَيراً عَن نَبِيِّكَ إِنَّهُ لَاقَاكَ نَاصِرَهُ الَّذِي لَا يَخْذُلُ
سَمعاً أَمِيرَ المؤمِنِينَ قَصائِداً يَعْنُو لَهَا بُشرٌ وَيَخْشَعُ جَزْوَلُ
الدُّرُّ مِنْ أَلفَاظِها لَكِنَّهُ دُرٌّ لَهُ ابنُ الحَدِيدِ يُفَصِّلُ
هِيَ دُونَ مَدحِ اللهِ فِيكَ وَفَوقَ مَا مُدِحَ الوَرَى وَعَلَاكَ مِنهَا أَكمَلُ.[402]

In this ode, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd is like a composer of love poetry who is overwhelmed by longing, and has made his beloved his *qiblah* and become consumed by the fire of his being spurned. He sees his beloved oblivious, unmoved by his burning love, with coldness and cruelty such that the poor unrequited lover cannot even enter his comfortable accommodation. She even begrudges him a single word or a single glance to soothe his wound like balsam. He then begins speaking to the Master of the Faithful, inspired by complaint and reproach:

Forbearance is bearable except over separation from you,
Hardships can be easy unless they are from vexation by you
Unjust one! I fixed it in my life blood, rigid and unswerving on the path of love!
I spent my whole life loving you graciously, but you are stingy and mean with a tiny amount,
If you discard my heart you kill yourself, for my heart is a place for you to shelter in and a home.
Do you think I can be ripped away by ill treatment? How can I be cured when I am fatally wounded?
Turn away, reject and be unfair. Love for you is constant, unchanged by any change in circumstances.
By God, I will find no solace from you,
Until I am buried under the earth and the grave envelops me.
Who is there for me who is more parched having taken my place, red-cheeked and eyes blackened with kohl.
The assured kind beloved with his endless favor and just.

I shall certainly rip the veil of modesty open to love for shamelessness is nicer in love
My face is flushed with fear when I look at his face,
Out of fear, then shame and shyness catch up with him.

Do not criticize the flow of tears,
for they are my soul lifted by burning love.
They are my life blood broken up through crying

Out of grief and sometimes broken up through groaning

O rider brought down by a Shadaniyyah [she-camel]
Like a pebble dropping from high
A hurricane cutting the heart of the course of the desert,
Until its hind legs overtake its front legs

Turn off at Gharī [Najaf] at a grave around which is a club and assembly place for Heaven's angels
Praising, hallowing, glorifying, extolling, exalting, saying, 'There is no god but God.'
And kiss its earth—fragrant musk—and give its aloes kisses, for they are a charm.

And look at the prayers ascending in his presence and armies of God's revelation descending
The light shines, eyes are transfixed, tongues are struck dumb, minds (*baṣā'ir*) are bewildered: but ponder—
Lower your voice and gaze because there is a secret the meanings of which are subtle and that is complex!

Say: 'Peace be upon you, Master of mortals!'
A prescription uttered by the revealed Book,
And a Caliphate even if it had not been prescribed, your glory would have earned it!

It's amazing the manner of the earth, its soil hiding the heights of your glory. How can it not quake?
It's amazing, Heaven's angels failing to look at your face. How can they not fall in a heap?
O mighty tiding. He is guided, he who loves him, and stray people are ignorant.
O fire that blazed light for Moses when darkness enveloped.
O Noah's Ark when the whole world was heaving sea and every sea was a creek.
O inheritor of the Torah and Gospels
The Qur'an and inconceivable aphorisms.
Were it not for you, time would not have been created
Or night would have been dark after the brightness of dawn.

If there truly is guidance in Muhammad's religion,
Love for you is its gate and entrance.

May God send blessing on you from the donner of shirts that no one but you should don.
And may He reward you greatly on behalf of your Prophet
For he found you to be his helper who never deserts.

Odes at your service, Master of the Faithful, to which glad tidings submit and stony soil yields
Pearl is one of their words but it is pearl that Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd arranges.
Regarding you they are lower than praise of God
But above what mortals have been praised with and your sublimity is more perfect than [these odes]!

Ibn Fāriḍ, the famous Egyptian mystic poet, says in the style of a prayer whispered to God, simultaneously complaining to and thanking Him in these two couplets:

ذَهَبَ الْعُمْرُ ضِياعاً وَانْقَضَى باطلاً إذْ لَمْ أَفُزْ مِنْكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ
غَيْرَ مَا أَوْلَيْتُ مِنْ عَقْدِ وَلا عِتْرَةِ الْمَبْعُوثِ مِنْ آلِ قُصَيّ.[403]

My life has wasted away and passed,
For I gained nothing from You!
Except what I was blessed with—a pledge of love for the close relations of the envoy from Quṣayy's family.

O God! Make us friends of Muhammad and his pure progeny, recompense our offspring and be merciful to us, most Merciful of the Merciful!

This is a tiniest presentation from us to the Gate of Knowledge, the lighthouse for the human race, the epitome of guidance, the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib, that God granted me the success to deliver as educational lectures in the mosque during the month of Ramadan 1395 AH and also to write them up that same holy month.

The aim of life is to leave our legacy
For there is ultimately no eternality for the world
Unless, through charity, and mercy
the dervishes pray for us with their faithfulness.

O Chief! Misfortune has afflicted us and our family, and we have brought meagre merchandise, so give us full measure and be charitable to us. Surely God rewards the charitable. (12:88)

[1] Hāshim Mūsawī Baḥrānī, *Ghāyat al-Marām* (Tehran: Dār al-Ṭibāᶜah Ali Qulī Khān Qājār, 1372 AH), hadith 4, p. 351; Muhammad Husayn Ṭabāṭabāᵓī, *al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qurᵓan* (Qum: Daftar Intishārāt Islāmī, 1429 AH), vol. 17, p. 49; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 44, citing *Baṣāᵓir al-Darajāt*.

[2] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 1, p. 351; Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1376 AH), vol. 7, p. 44, citing *Baṣāᵓir al-Darajāt*, p. 45.

[3] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 8, p. 351.

[4] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 16, p. 353: Jalāl al-Din Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (n.p., Dār al-Maᶜrifah, 1404 AH), vol. 5, p. 25 says under the noble verse: *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves, while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds*...He said: "Those are all on the same level and are all going to Heaven."

[5] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 7, p. 351.

[6] *al-Mīzān*, vol. 17, p. 50; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 43, citing *Maᶜānī al-Akhbār*.

[7] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 11, p. 352; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 44, quoting Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Saᶜd al-Suᶜūd*, quoting Muhammad Ibn ᶜAbbās Ibn Marwān's exegesis; *al-Durr al-Manthūr* says: "Abū al-Dardāᵓ said: 'I heard God's Messenger say: "The Exalted God says: *Then We left this Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants, whom We had chosen. Yet there are some of them who wrong themselves while others follow a middle course, and there are some who are foremost in good deeds with God's permission*... As for those who are foremost, they will enter Heaven without reckoning. As for those follow a middle course, they are those who will be given an easy reckoning. As for those who wrong themselves, they will be reckoned throughout the resurrection. Then there will be those whom God receives with mercy because they are those who say, *Praise be to God Who has taken our sadness away from us! Surely our Lord is Oft-Forgiving, [and] Appreciative, the One Who has settled us in the everlasting Abode by His bounty, wherein no weariness will touch nor fatigue affects us.* (35:34-35)"'"

[8] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 352, hadith 9; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 44, citing *Maᶜānī al-Akhbār* (*The Meaning of the Hadiths*).

[9] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 353, hadith 18; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 44, citing *Kashf al-Ghummah*.
[10] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 351, hadith 4; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 226, citing *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*.
[11] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 226
[12] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 22.
[13] Ibid., p. 226.
[14] Ibid., p. 227.
[15] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 229.
[16] Ibid., p. 227.
[17] Muhammad Ibn Ṭalḥa al-Shāfiʿī (lithograph, n.d.), *Maṭālib al-Saʾūl*, p. 22.
[18] Ibn Ṣabbāgh Makkī al-Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah* (Najaf: Maṭbaʿat al-ʿAdl, n.d.), p. 121.
[19] Sulaymān Ibn Ibrahim Qundūzī Ḥanafī, *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah* (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat al-Akhtar, 1301), p. 214.
[20] Ibn al-Maghāzilī, *al-Manāqib* (Tehran: al-Maktabat al-Islāmiyyah, 1394 AH), p. 212.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ahmad Ibn ʿAbdullāh Ṭabarī al-Shāfiʿī, *Dhakhāʾir al-ʿUqbā* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsī, 1356), p. 94.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Muhammad Ibn Yūsuf Ganji Shāfiʿī, *Kifāyat al-Ṭālib* (Najaf: al-Ṭabāʿat al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1390 AH), pp. 121–122.
[25] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 131; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 436, citing Ibn Shādhān, *al-Faḍāʾil*. This book narrates a slightly different wording from ʿAbbās from the Prophet on the Day of Khaybar. The Qurʾanic verses relevant to this issue are (43: 57–59).
[26] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 131.
[27] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 283.
[28] Ahmad Ibn ʿAbdillāh Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al Awliyāʾ* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿat Khānjī, 1351 AH), vol. 1, p. 66.
[29] *Ḥilyat al Awliyāʾ*, vol. 1, p. 66.
[30] *Ḥilyat al Awliyāʾ*, vol. 1, p. 68.
[31] *Ḥilyat al Awliyāʾ*, vol. 1, p. 68.
[32] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 216.
[33] Fakhr al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabir* (Egypt: Dār al-Ṭibāʿat al-ʿĀmirah, n.d.), vol. 21, p. 91.
[34] عرصة means "courtyard." Any undeveloped land is called عرصة.
[35] Muhammad Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib* (Qum: Intishārāt ʿAllāmah, n.d.), vol. 1, pp. 448–449.

[36] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 1, p. 450.
[37] Ibid., p. 451.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 452.
[40] The term may refer to barren land.
[41] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 459.
[42] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 46.
[43] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 460. ʿAllāmah Amīnī discusses this hadith in ʿAbd al-Husayn Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* (Tehran: Maṭbaʿat Ḥaydarī, 1373 AH), vol. 3, pp. 126–142 on the matter of the sun's being brought back and the response to those who deny it. Also in *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 3, p. 393, he recounts the other time the sun was brought back for him. The hadith is obviously different from Ibn Shahr Āshūb's.
[44] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 460.
[45] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 461.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 464; ʿAllāmah Amīnī says in *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 3, p. 392 that Ḥamwīnī in *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn*, Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Khārazmī in *al-Manāqib* (Najaf: n.d.) p. 68, and Qundūzī in *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 140, narrate this hadith from the Prophet.
[50] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 464.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 466.
[54] Ibid.
[55] SR: *Taʾawwahtu* means "I said: '*Āh*,'" which according to the hadith is one of God's Names. It truly is remarkably how people who speak different languages in different parts of the world all produce this sound when experiencing pain or anguish. Some may interpret it as further evidence of every person's innate and instinctive belief in God before his environment changes him. The approximately equivalent onomatopoeic "Argh!" is used in the main text to avoid confusion with the English word "Ah!" which means something else entirely.
[56] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 472.
[57] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 473.
[58] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 475.
[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
63 Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 476. The reference to Jābir is to Jābir Ibn ᶜAbdillāh al-Anṣārī.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Shalqān is a village in Egypt. It may be that Shalqān is stated here after Salmān to avoid confusion with Salmān Fārsī, because Salmān Shalqān was a companion of and narrator of Imam Ṣādiq.
[68] *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 476; Ismāʿīl Ibn Muhammad Ḥimyarī, *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī* (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, n.d.), p. 242.
[69] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 477.
[70] See Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 477.
[71] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 406.
[72] *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, pp. 322–323.
[73] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 407.
[74] *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 77.
[75] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, ch. 40.
[76] Ibid.
[77] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah* ch. 40, p. 122.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., p. 123.
[80] *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 278.
[81] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 127.
[82] Muhammad Hasan Muẓaffar Najafī, *Dalāʾil al-Ṣidq* (n.p.: Būdharjumhūr, 1372 AH), vol. 2, p. 80.
[83] These couplets are from his *ᶜayniyyah* [i.e. the last letter of each couplet is an *ᶜayn*]. It is one of his seven odes known as: *al-ᶜAlawiyyāt al-Sabᶜ* (*The Seven Poems about Ali*) by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, published under the title *al-Muᶜallaqāt al-Sabᶜ* (*Seven Poems to Hang*). The pages of the book are unnumbered, but it appears at the beginning of the last quarter. How well Mawlānā Rūmī says: "Ali was the quintessence of the prophets, so he was Adam, Seth, Job, Enoch, Joseph, Jonah, Hūd, Moses, Jesus, Khiḍr, Elias, Ṣāliḥ, and David. He it was who discovered the secrets of the Qurʾan. God praised him and described him as infallible throughout His Book."

[84] SR: The Prophet called the Imam pot-bellied (*baṭīn*), even though the Imam was known for eating very little. According to *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, it was the Master of the Faithful's knowledge that inflated his abdomen. In his own words:

اما كبر بطني فأن رسول الله (ص) علّمني بابا من العلم فتح الباب ألف باب فازدحم في بطني فنفخت عن ضلوعي

"...As for the largeness of my belly, it is because God's Messenger taught me a door of knowledge and that door opened a thousand doors. It then crowded in my belly so it was inflated away from my ribs." *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī, 1988), vol. 1, pp. 190–191, chapter 128, hadith 2. The prophetic hadith that follows says:

وأنه الانزع من الشرك، بطين من العلم

"...and he is stripped of polytheism and has a belly full of knowledge" (Ibid., hadith 3). Scholars who prefer not to refer to *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ* interpret it as irony, which is common in Arabic—referring to someone who is remarkably slim from asceticism as corpulent (*baṭīn*) is very similar to referring to a blind man as someone endowed with acute eyesight (*baṣīr*) or Abū Baṣīr. A further alternative is that the Imam's asceticism may have enlarged his liver and reduced his abdominal muscle mass.

[85] Imam Ali, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. Sayyid Raḍī (Egypt: Maṭbaʿat ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, n.d.), pp. 153–154, sermon 85.

[86] Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (Egypt: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1378 AH), vol. 6, pp. 377–378.

[87] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 269, sermon 147.

[88] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 351, hadith 2.

[89] Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, (n.p.: Majmaʾ Iḥyāʾ al-Thiqāfat al-Islāmiyyah, 1411 AH), vol. 2, p. 104.

[90] Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Bābawayh (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (Lithograph, 1275 AH), p. 149.

[91] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 352, hadith 10.

[92] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 45.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 481.

[95] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 677.

[96] Shaykh ʿAbbās Qumī, *Muntahā al-Āmāl* (Ṭabʿ ʿIlmiyyah Islamiyyah, n.d), vol. 1, p. 134.

[97] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 121, chapter 40.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 484.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib* vol. 1, p.484; Muᶜāwiyah's encounter with Ibn ᶜAbbās is related in full in *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 41, citing *Kitāb Sulaym Ibn Qays*, pp. 202–203.
[107] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 485.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Shaykh Kāẓim Uzrī, *Dīwān al-Uzrī* (Najaf: Maṭbaᶜat Nuᶜmān, 1386 AH).
[110] This is from the final part of Muhammad Rūmī Balkhī (Mawlawī), *Mathnawī* (Tehran: Intisharāt Jāvidān 1371 AH).
[111] *Safīnat al-Biḥār*, vol. 2, pp. 231–232.
[112] *Safīnat al-Biḥār*, vol. 2, p. 230.
[113] *Tafsīr Abū al-Futūḥ*, vol. 6, p. 503.
[114] Maḥmūd Ibn Omar Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜArabī, n.d), vol. 2, p. 536.
[115] *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 69.
[116] This statement is correct, but we should say about the Qurʾan, in response to the unbelievers who do not acknowledge the righteousness of God's Messenger, that because the Qurʾan is a miracle manifested by God through the noble Prophet, it is God's testimony on his behalf. Fakhr Rāzīʾs argument needs this extra level of reasoning to make it correct.
[117] *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 69; *Tafsīr Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301 attributes this opinion to Hasan, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr, and says that it is the opinion favored by Zajjāj.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf*, vol. 2, p. 536.
[121] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 424.
[122] *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 70
[123] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69.
[124] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 425

[125] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69.
[126] *al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 424; *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 69; *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301, *al-Kashshāf*, vol. 2, p. 536; *Tafsīr Abī al-Suᶜūd*, vol. 3, p. 235.
[127] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69
[128] *al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 425.
[129] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 104, section 30.
[130] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 425.
[131] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 104, chapter 30.
[132] *al-Istīᶜāb*, vol. 3, p. 922.
[133] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69.
[134] Ibid.
[135] *Tafsīr Abī al-Suᶜūd*, vol. 3, p. 235.
[136] *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 70.
[137] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 2; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 102, chapter 30; *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, p. 308.
[138] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 5; *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ*, vol. 6, p. 504; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 102, chapter 30.
[139] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 6, p. 358; *al-Mīzān* vol. 11, p. 427.
[140] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 9, p. 358.
[141] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 358, hadith 6 (repeated); *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 102, chapter 30.
[142] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān* vol. 1, p. 427.
[143] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, chapter 30, p. 102; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.357, hadith 1; *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, p. 308; *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ*, vol. 6, p. 504; *Tafsīr al-Mīzān* vol. 11, p. 427.
[144] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, p. 307.
[145] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, p. 310.
[146] Ibid.
[147] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 104, chapter 30.
[148] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 3; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30; citing Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*.
[149] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 3; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30.
[150] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 6; *al-Mīzān*, vol. 3, p. 301.
[151] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 4, p. 357.
[152] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, hadith 1; *al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 427.

[153] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 358, hadith 13; *Tafsīr Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301.
[154] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 358, hadith 8; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30; *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301.
[155] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 358, hadith 12; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30.
[156] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357; the end of this hadith is narrated in *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301; Muhammad Ibn Yaᶜqūb Kulaynī, *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1377 AH), vol. 1, p. 257, Kitāb al-Hujjah (*The Book of the Proof*).
[157] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30.
[158] Ibid.
[159] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.358, hadith 18; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30.
[160] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 358, hadith 3.
[161] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 103, chapter 30.
[162] *Rijāl al-Barqī*, p. 2.
[163] *Rijāl Ibn Dāwūd*, p. 205.
[164] ᶜAbdullāh Māmaqānī, *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl* (Najaf: al-Maṭbaᶜat al-Murtaḍawiyyah, 1352 AH), vol. 2, p. 185.
[165] Muhammad Taqi Tustarī, *Qāmūs al-Rijāl* (Tehran: Markaz-e Nashr Kitāb, 1379 AH), vol. 5, p. 471.
[166] *Istīᶜāb*, vol. 3, p. 922.
[167] Ibn Athīr Jazarī, *Usd al-Ghābah fi Maᵓrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyaᵓ al-Turāth al-ᶜArabī, n.d.), vol. 3, p. 176.
[168] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69.
[169] Ibid.
[170] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 104, chapter 30; citing *Kitāb Sulaym Ibn Qays al-Hilālī*, pp. 199–201.
[171] This part does not belong to the verse. (SR: According to Ibn Jarīr [al-Ṭabarī], ᶜAmr Ibn Murrah would recite (26:214) with these additional words at the end. Majlisī attributes this variant recitation to Ibn Masᶜūd in *Biḥār al-Anwār*).
[172] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, chapter 30, p. 104.
[173] *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 301.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal narrates this hadith from Zayd Ibn Thābit via two authentic chains, the first at the beginning of page 182, and the second at the end of page 189, in volume 5 of his *Musnad*. He says:

"The Prophet said, 'I am leaving two precious things among you: God's Book and my Household; they will not separate until they come to me by the Pool.'"

Al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 7 cites the hadith as: "I am leaving among you two precious things to which if you cling, you will never go astray after I die. One of them is greater than the other—God's Book, a cord stretching from Heaven to earth—and my close family, my Household. They will not separate until they come to me by the Pool, so watch how you take over care of them from me!"

Ghāyat al-Marām cites 39 Sunni hadiths and 82 Shi'a hadiths from page 11 onwards.

[176] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 69.

[177] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 259.

[178] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 258.

[179] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 29.

[180] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, pp. 359–361.

[181] *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 3, p. 324, sets out these possible explanations and opinions, stating whose they are, as does *Majma' al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 150.

[182] A great spiritual religious leader and pious brother—one of the most erudite scholars in Tehran—while studying the manuscript of this book, commented in the margin of one of the pages: "It is extremely unlikely that

وشهد شاهد من بنی اسرءیل علی مثله

means Joshua son of Nūn's strong belief in the Torah, because this would make the sentences in the verse incoherent; I do not remember any other exegete considering it to be a possible explanation—nor have any hadiths to that effect reached us. It is true that one exegete believes that the witness means Moses son of Amram—a witness to the like of the Qur'an, namely the Torah—because the Torah contains a description of the noble Prophet and gives glad tidings of his advent. This is a coherent interpretation that appreciates how the verses link together." The writer of the book says: This statement is not correct, because, firstly, it is only unlikely that

وشهد شاهد من بنی اسرءیل علی مثله

could mean Joshua son of Nūn's belief in the Torah, and the link between the parts of the verse is only unclear if "Torah" just means the Divine Book revealed to Moses as opposed to the Torah insofar as it

contains a description of the Noblest Prophet and glad tidings of his advent. If the reference to the Torah is understood as such, the link is clear. What difference does it make to interpret the witness as Moses, or as his successor, Joshua Ibn Nūn, because either way

مثله

means the Torah which confirms the Noblest Messenger? Thus, this verse is proof for the Prophet against the Jews who did not accept his invitation. Secondly, the prophetic hadith cited by Suyūṭī says:

فآمن هذا بكتابه وبنبيه وكفرتم يا اهل مكة

"So this [Israelite witness] believed in his Book and Messenger, but you, Meccans disbelieve!" Obviously

نبيه

his Prophet, means the prophet of his time, that is, Moses, not our Prophet, who relied on this verse as evidence against the Jews. The verse means: "[Joshua] believed in his prophet so why do you not believe in yours?" Therefore, the witness in this verse can mean no other than Joshua son of Nūn. Even though there is no hadith evidence to support this interpretation, there is none to contradict it, either. Whenever exegetes' opinions are not based on incontrovertible evidence or hadiths attributable to the Infallibles, they can be considered to be personal opinion, and there is no harm in rejecting them on the basis of apparent meaning, the context derived from the continued relevance and applicability (*taṭbīq*) of the verses, analysis of the meaning, and the purport to be inferred from the verses.

[183] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 40.

[184] *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 5, p. 86.

[185] *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfī*, vol. 2, p. 554, under the heading: "It is claimed [it means] ᶜAbdullāh Ibn Salām."

[186] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 18, p. 210.

[187] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 39.

[188] *al-Istiᶜāb*, vol. 3, p. 922.

[189] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 39.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Ibid.

[193] Ibid.

[194] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 359, hadith 2; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99, worded slightly differently.

[195] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 10, p. 201.
[196] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.362, hadith 11.
[197] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.362, hadith 13.
[198] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 280.
[199] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 360, hadith 17.
[200] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 276.
[201] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 275.
[202] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, p. 324.
[203] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p 361, hadith 1; p. 362, hadith 8.
[204] We cite an abridged version of this hadith as per *Ghāyat al-Marām*, but it is cited in full, along with the buildup to it between Qays and Muʿāwiyah, in *Kitāb Sulaym Ibn Qays*, pp. 199–202.
[205] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 361, hadith 7.
[206] Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd explains ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ's lineage in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (vol. 6, p. 281): his father, ʿĀṣ Ibn Waʾīl, was one of those who mocked God's Messenger and manifested open hostility to him. God revealed this verse about him to His Messenger: *We surely suffice you against the mockers!* (15:95)
[207] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 359, *hadith* 1; Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib*, pp. 129–130.
[208] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 61–73, where he explains in detail how ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ came to join forces with Muʿāwiyah, within the commentary on sermon 26; *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, pp. 280–330.
[209] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, p. 282.
[210] Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī, *Kitāb Sulaym* (Najaf: n.p., n.d.), p. 172.
[211] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, p. 282.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid. p. 283.
[214] Ibid. pp. 318–319, sermon 83.
[215] Abū Omar Yūsuf Ibn al-Bajāwi, *al-Istiʿāb* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Nahḍah, 1380 AH), vol. 3, p. 1185.
[216] Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 131.
[217] Ibid. pp. 130–131.
[218] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 62.
[219] Ibid.
[220] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 62; Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 131.
[221] Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 132.
[222] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, p. 285.
[223] Ibid. p. 295.

[224] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99.
[225] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 5, p. 361.
[226] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99
[227] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 10, p. 201.
[228] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p.99, chapter 26.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Ibid.
[231] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 10, p. 324.
[232] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 3, p. 324.
[233] Ibid.
[234] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, pp. 275–276.
[235] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 278.
[236] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 359, hadith 4 citing *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn*.
[237] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 360, *hadith* 9.
[238] Ibid. p. 361, *hadith* 3.
[239] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 10, p. 200.
[240] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 280.
[241] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 360, hadith 10.
[242] Ibn Maghāzilī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 270, hadith 318.
[243] *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99, chapter 26; *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 3, p. 324; *Shawāhīd al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, pp. 278-281.
[244] *Shawāhīd al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 277, footnote.
[245] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 12, p. 15.
[246] *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ*, vol. 6, p. 256.
[247] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 359, chapter 61, hadith 5.
[248] Ibid., p. 360, chapter 61, hadith 7.
[249] Ibid., hadith 14.
[250] Ibid., hadith 15.
[251] Ibid., hadith 19.
[252] Ibid., hadith 20.
[253] Ibid., hadith 21.
[254] Ibid., hadith 22.
[255] Ibid., p. 360, chapter 60, hadith 23.
[256] Ibid., p.361, chapter 62, hadith 4.
[257] Ibid., hadith 6.
[258] Ibid., p. 362, hadith 9.
[259] Ibid., hadith 10.
[260] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 10, p. 200.
[261] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 73.
[262] Ibid.

[263] Ibid.
[264] Ibid.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid., p. 74
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid.
[272] In *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 569, Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

أبو عبيد في «غريب الحديث»: انّ النبيّ قال لأمير المؤمنين: انّ لك بيتاً في الجنّة وانّك لذو قرنيها. سويد بن غفلة وأبو الطفيل: قالَ أمير المؤمنين: انّ ذا القرنين كان ملكاً عادلاً فأحبّه الله وناصح الله فنَصَحَهُ اللهُ، امَر قومه بتقوى الله فضربوه على قرنه بالسّيف فغاب عنهم ما شاء الله ثمّ رجع اليهم فدعاهم الى الله فضربوه على قرنه الآخر بالسيف فذلك قرناه، وفيكم مثله يعني نفسه لانّه ضرب على رأسه ضربتين احدهما يوم الخندق والثانى ضربة ابن مُلجم

"Abū ʿUbaydah [says] in *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* that the Prophet said to the Master of the Faithful: "You have a house in Heaven and you are [this nation's] Dhū al-Qarnayn." Suwayd Ibn Ghaflah and Abū Ṭufayl [say]: "The Master of the Faithful said: 'Dhu al-Qarnayn was a just king, so God loved him. He was sincere to God, so God helped him. He enjoined his people to fear God, but they struck him with a sword on his temporal ridge (*qarn*). He then went away from them for as long as God willed, and then returned to them and invited them to God. However, they struck him with a sword on his other temporal ridge (*qarn*). So that is what his two *qarns* mean. There is among you one like him,' meaning himself, because he was struck on his head twice, once at the Battle of Khandaq and the second time by Ibn Muljam."

[273] SR: I.e. the Master of the Faithful would be granted a favor or be blessed even when he did not ask.
[274] Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Abī al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī, *Rūḥ al-Jānān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾan* (Known as *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ*) (Tehran: Ṭabʿ al-Islāmiyyah, 1382 AH), vol. 6, pp. 256–258.
[275] Ibid., vol. 6, p. 257, footnote.
[276] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 183.
[277] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, chapter 7, p. 53.

[278] This is an indubitable (*mutawātir*) hadith concerning the Prophet's departure for the Battle of Tabūk narrated by Sunnis and Shiʿa via many chains and cited in both Shiʿa and Sunni collections.
[279] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 73, "Letter to Othman Ibn Ḥunayf."
[280] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 392, "The Sermon of Disparagement (al-Qāṣiʿah)"
[281] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 285.
[282] Ibid., p. 289.
[283] Ibid., p. 290.
[284] Ibid., p. 290.
[285] Ibid., vol. 7, p. 333.
[286] Abu al-Fidāʾ al-Ḥāfiz Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (Najaf: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿādah, 1377 AH), vol. 7, p. 359; *Dhakhāʾir al-ʿUqbā*, p. 77; *Maṭālib al-Saʾūl*, p. 13; *Naẓm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 113; *Ḥilyat al Awliyāʾ*, vol. 1, p. 64; Mirzā Najm al-Dīn Sharīf ʿAskarī, *Ali wa al-Waṣiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Zahrā, 1398 AH), pp. 22 and 174; *Istidrākāt Ali wa al-Waṣiyyah*, p. 382; citing the manuscript of *Tārīkh Ibn ʿAsākir*; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 520 cites 16 Sunni hadiths and six Shiʿa hadiths; *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 6, pp. 61–77, cites 134 sources for this.
[287] Husayn Ibn Muhammad Taqī Muḥaddith Nūri, *Mustadrak al-Wasāʾil* (n.p.: Maṭbaʿ-e Āqā Mirzā Maḥmūd Tājir, 1321 AH), vol. 3, p. 197, Abwāb al-Mazār.
[288] ʿAbbās Qumī, *Mafātiḥ al-Jinān* (Tehran: Islāmiyyah, 1379 AH), p. 355.
[289] Ibid., pp. 356–357.
[290] *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 213; *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 217; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 569.
[291] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 227.
[292] *Samaydaʿ* means a handsome, hulking, broad-shouldered nobleman
[293] SR: The idiom of having an ample courtyard is an allusion to generosity.
[294] *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī*, vol. 6, p. 462.
[295] *Tafsīr Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 278; *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 14
[296] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[297] *Tafsīr Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī*, vol. 6, p. 462.
[298] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[299] *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī*, vol. 19, p. 13.
[300] *Tafsīr Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 278.

[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid.
[303] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, pp. 335 and 359.
[304] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[305] Sulṭān Muhammad Janābadhi, *Tafsīr Bayān al-Saᶜādah* (Lithograph, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 392.
[306] Ismāʾīl Ḥaqqi Brūsawi, *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān* (Maṭbaᶜah ᶜUthmāniyyah, 1330 AH), vol. 4, p. 346.
[307] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 567; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 237; Hāshim Mūsawī Baḥrānī, *Tafsīr al-Burhān* (n.p., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 519; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75.
[308] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 1; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[309] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 6.
[310] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, end of hadith 6; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[311] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.236, hadith 8; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[312] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p.236, hadith 11.
[313] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 237, hadith 17.
[314] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 2; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[315] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 237, hadith 18; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76.
[316] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 3.
[317] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 4.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Ibid., p. 235, hadith 4.
[320] *al-Manāqib*, Ibn Shahr Āshūb, vol. 1, p. 567.
[321] Ibid.
[322] Faḍl Ibn al-Hasan Ṭabarsī (Ṭabrisī), *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān* (Tehran: Intishārāt Nāṣir Khusro, 1372 HS), vol. 3, p. 278.
[323] Muhsin Fayḍ Kāshāni, *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfī* (n.p.: Ṭabᶜ Islamiyyah, 1384), vol. 1, p. 865.
[324] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[325] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[326] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 295.
[327] Ibid.
[328] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 237, hadith 15.
[329] Ibid. p.237, hadith 19.
[330] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 237, hadith 23.
[331] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid.

[334] Ibid.
[335] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 5; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[336] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 227, hadith 21.
[337] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[338] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 300.
[339] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45; *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 360, citing *al-Durr al-Manthūr*.
[340] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 5; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 567; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99, chapter 26; Ḥamwīnī narrates exactly the same hadith via his chain from Abū Hurayrah.
[341] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 567.
[342] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 299.
[343] Ibid.
[344] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 300.
[345] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 236, hadith 9; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518.
[346] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76.
[347] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45; *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 360, citing *al-Durr al-Manthūr*; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 5; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 568; *Yanābīᶜ al-Mawaddah*, p. 99, chapter 26, worded slightly differently from the version in Thaᶜlabī, *Sharḥ al-Kashshāf*.
[348] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 19; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75; *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī*, vol. 6, p. 463; *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 360; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 567.
[349] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 293.
[350] Ibid. pp. 293–296.
[351] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, 567; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75.
[352] *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ*, vol. 3, p. 278.
[353] *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 11, p. 360.
[354] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 4, p. 45.
[355] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, pp. 297–298.
[356] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 2; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75, citing Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*.
[357] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75, citing Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*.
[358] Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib*, p. 568; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[359] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76.
[360] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 296.

[361] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 567; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 75, citing *al-Manāqib*.
[362] *Tafsīr Abī al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī*, vol. 6, p. 463.
[363] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 301.
[364] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 236, hadith 14, quoting Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī Kūfī; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[365] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, hadith 16, p. 237; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 76.
[366] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 192; it is cited repeatedly in *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 518; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 3.
[367] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 235, hadith 6; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[368] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[369] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 236, hadith 11; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, pp. 517–518.
[370] These words appear in the introduction to Mīr Ḥamīd Husayn Lucknowī Hindī Nīshābūrī, *ʿAbaqāt al-Anwār* (Isfahan: Muʾassasat al-Nashr, Nafāʾis Makhṭūṭāt, 1380 AH), vol. 12, p. 1.
[371] Ibid., pp. 1165–1188.
[372] *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 482; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 298, hadith 26, in the sermon delivered by Imam Hasan when he pledged allegiance to Muʿāwiyah; he cites an abridged version of this sermon via another chain under the heading "hadith 27" on pp. 298 and 299.
[373] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 262.
[374] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 267 sermon 145; *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah*, p. 446.
[375] Sayyid Ali Khān, *Sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah*, p. 500.
[376] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 171.
[377] SR: An insect's young is called a nymph. "Riffraff nymphs" is the best translation of همج رعاع
[378] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 179, Kitāb al-Ḥujjah.
[379] Ibid.
[380] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 180, Kitāb al-Ḥujjah.
[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid., p. 178.
[383] Ibid.
[384] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 179.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Ibid.
[387] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 179.
[388] Ibid.

[389] Ibid.
[390] Ibid.
[391] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 173.
[392] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 178.
[393] Ibid. p. 179.
[394] Ibid. p. 177.
[395] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 517.
[396] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 236, hadith 12.
[397] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 76–77.
[398] *ʿAbaqāt al-Anwār*, vol. 12, part 2, sections 1, 2, and 3.
[399] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 568; *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 200.
[400] *Dīvān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 206; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 569.
[401] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 568.
[402] This ode by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd is published along with his other odes, under the title of *al-ʿAlawiyyāt al-Sabʿ*, in *al-Muʾallaqāt al-Sabʿah*.
[403] Abū Ḥafs Omar Ibn Abī al-Hasan al-Ḥamūʾī, *Dīvān Ibn al-Fāriḍ* (Beirut: Dār al-Ṣādir, 1382 AH), p. 25.

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